

JULY 1909

THE WOMEN MEN MARRY

by Professor Frederick Starr

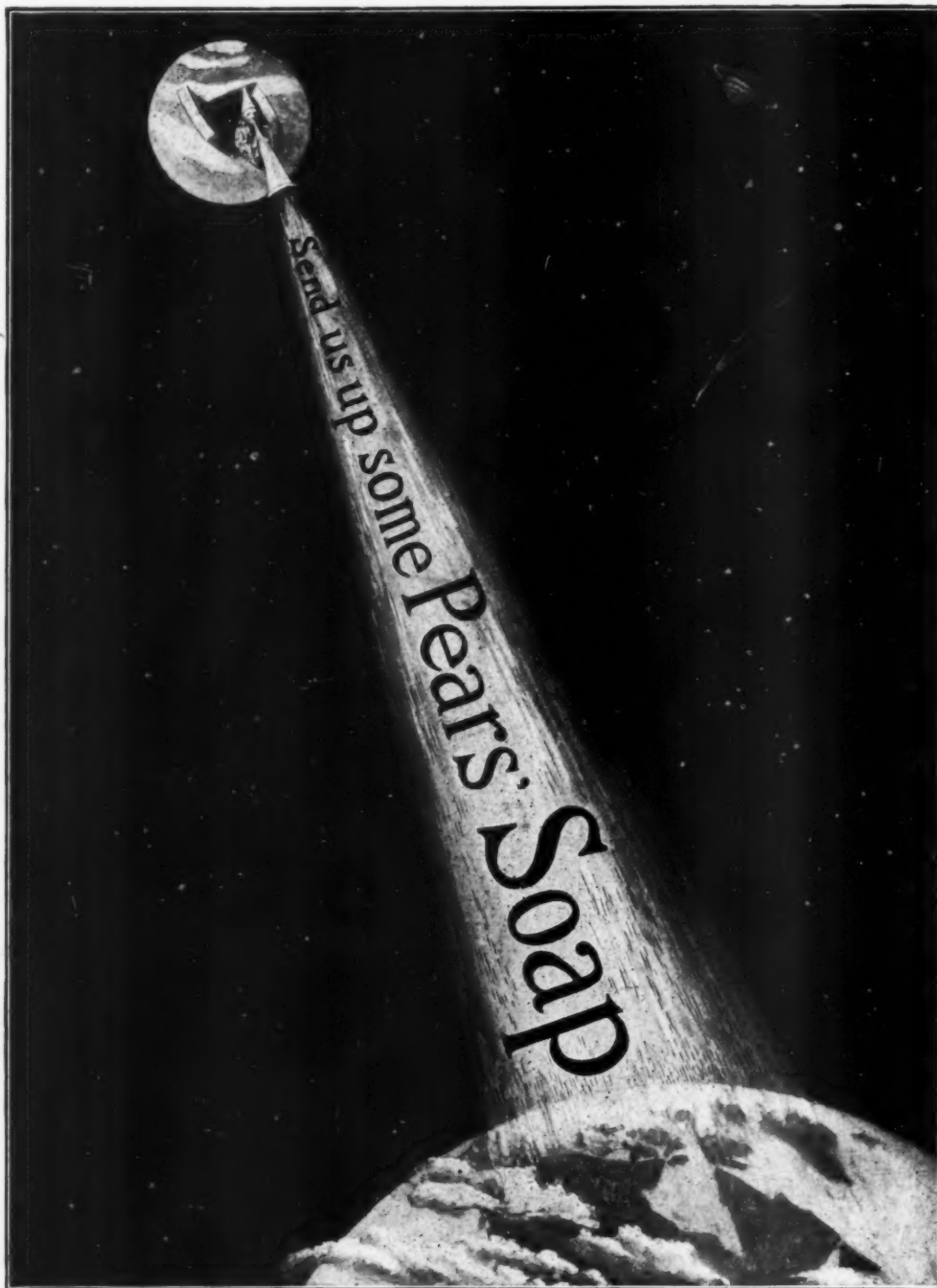
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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE



Published Monthly by THE RED BOOK CORPORATION, 156 W. 16th State Street, CHICAGO.

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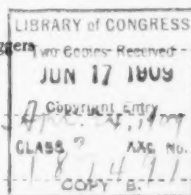
MAGAZINE

EDITED BY KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN

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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE is issued on the twenty-third of the month preceding its date and is for sale by all newsdealers after that time. In the event of failure to obtain copies at news-stands or on railway-trains, a notification to the Publishers will be appreciated.

Advertising forms close three weeks prior to the time of issue. Advertising rates on application.

THE RED BOOK CORPORATION, Publishers
158-164 State Street, CHICAGO

LOUIS ECKSTEIN, President
RALPH K. STRASSMAN, Advertising Manager
S. L. SCHMID, Associate Mgr., Eastern Office } 6092-3 Metropolitan Building, NEW YORK
BOSTON OFFICES, 2 Beacon St., JULIUS MATHEWS, Manager
LONDON OFFICES, 5 Henrietta St., Covent Garden, LONDON, W. C.

Entered as second-class matter April 25, 1905, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1897

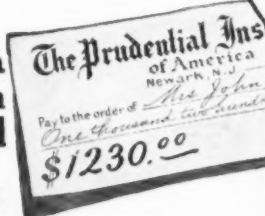
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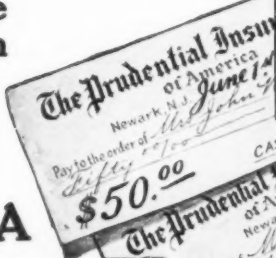


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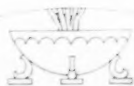
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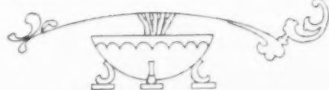
PHOTOGRAPH BY MOFFETT STUDIO, CHICAGO.

MISS EFFIE SHANNON
Costar with Kyle Bellew in "The Thief."



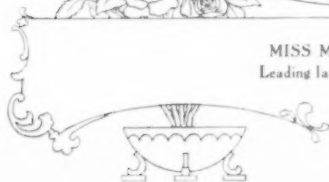


MISS VIOLA ALLEN
Starring in "The White Sister."



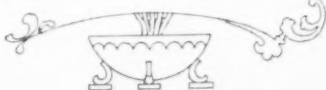


MISS MARY BOLAND
Leading lady with John Drew.





MISS OLGA NETHERSOLE
Presenting "The Writing on the Wall."



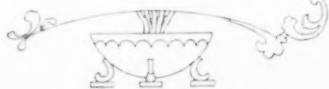


MISS MARIE DRESSLER
Who has returned to the American stage.



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MISS MARIE DORO
Starring in "The Richest Girl."



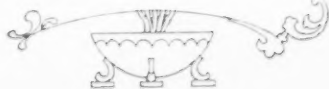


MISS TRIXIE FRIGANZA
In George M. Cohan's "The American Idea."





MISS HATTIE WILLIAMS
Starring in "Fluffy Ruffles."





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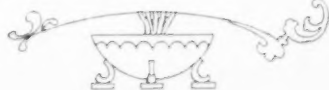
MISS ELSIE FERGUSON
In "The Traveling Salesman."





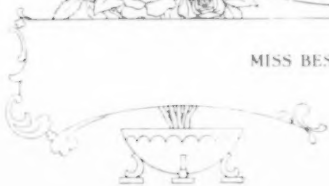
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MISS MARIE NORDSTROM
With Henry E. Dixey in "Mary Jane's Pa."



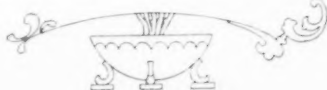


MISS BESSIE ARMSTRONG





MISS FANNY WARD
Starring in "The New Lady Bantock."





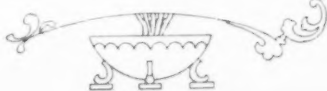
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MISS MARGUERITE CLARK
With Jefferson De Angelis in "The Beauty Spot."





MISS LOUISE DRESSER
In "The Candy Shop."





MISS SAIDIE HARRIS
With Victor Moore in "The Talk of New York."



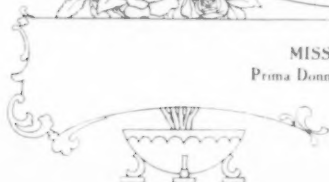


MISS CHRYSTAL HERNE
With Walker Whiteside in "The Melting Pot."



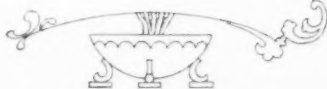


MISS LORA LIEB
Prima Donna in "The Alaskan."



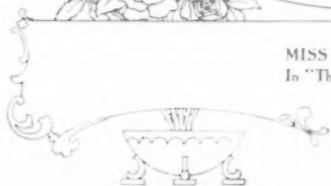


MISS LAURETTA TAYLOR
In "The Great John Ganton."



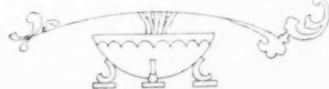


MISS MADGE VOE
In "The Broken Idol"



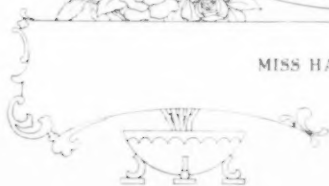


MISS MARION LONGFELLOW



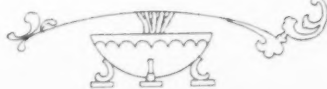


MISS HARRIET NOTTER



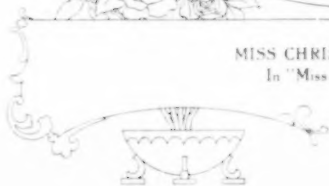


MISS JOSEPHINE BROWN





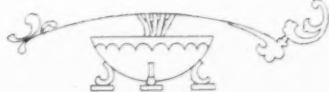
MISS CHRISTIE MAC DONALD
In "Miss Hook of Holland."





PHOTOGRAPH BY MOFFETT STUDIO, CHICAGO.

MISS JULIA FRARY





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MISS ELPHYE SNOWDEN
In "Little Nemo."

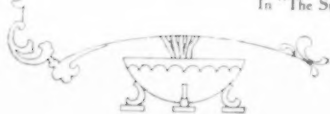


MISS JOSEPHINE COHAN
Who is playing with the others of the "Four."



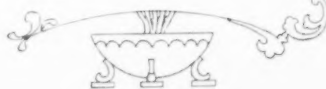


MISS ALICE DOVEY
In "The Stubborn Cinderella."





MISS FLORENCE DEMEREST
In "The Prince of To-Night."

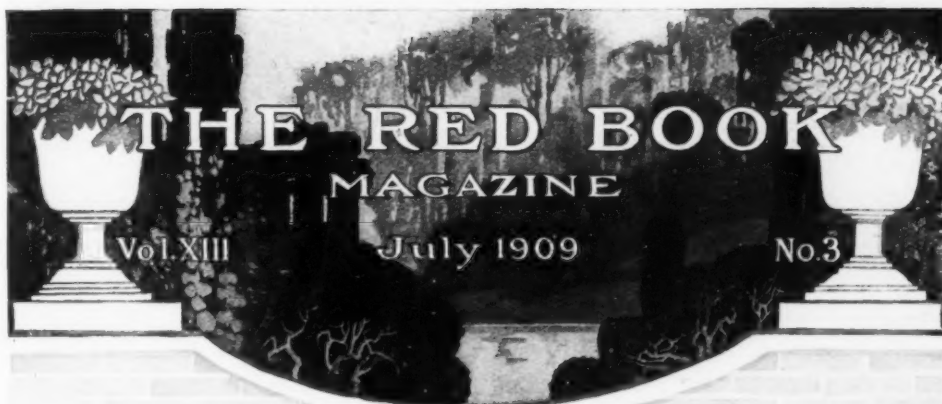




DRAWN BY HENRY RALEIGH

Looking at the absorbed face before him

To accompany "Bread"—page 459



A Fordyce of Westbrook

BY JAMES BRANCH CABELL

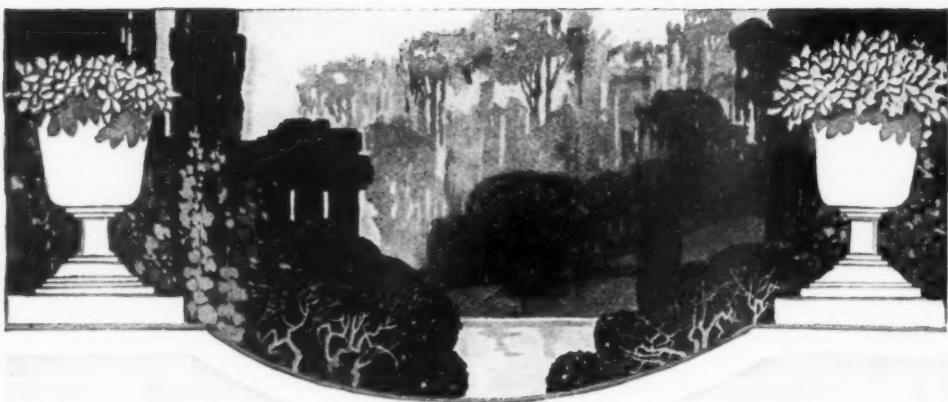
AUTHOR OF "THE QUEST," ETC.

Illustrated by W. H. D. Koerner



COLONEL FORDYCE was by birth the lineal head of all the Fordyces of Westbrook, who in Lichfield, as degrees are counted there, is equivalent to being born a marquis in England. Handsome and trim and affable, he defied chronology by looking ten years younger than he was known to be. For at least a decade he had been invaluable to Lichfield matrons in the entertainment of an "out-of-town" girl, the management of a cotillion, and the prevention of unpleasant pauses among incongruous dinner-companies. In short, he was, by all accounts, the social triumph of his generation; and his military title, won by four years of arduous service at receptions and parades, while on the staff of a former Governor of the State, this seasoned bachelor carried off with an entire plausibility and distinction.

But at forty-five he fell in love with Miss Harriet Wadleigh. The affair, conducted throughout with that benevolent decorum peculiar to the colonel, was set in train one summer at Whitebrier Springs, where his arrival found those other *habit-ués*, with whom it was a rite to spend each August there because their grandparents had never failed to do so, a little dubious as to what recognition, if any, should be accorded the existence of the Wadleighs. Indisputably Wadleigh *père* was very rich; but it was equally undeniable that he had made his money through a series of commercial speculations distinguished both by shiftiness and daring, and that the man himself had been, until the War, a wholly negligible "poor-white" person—an overseer, indeed, for Colonel Fordyce's

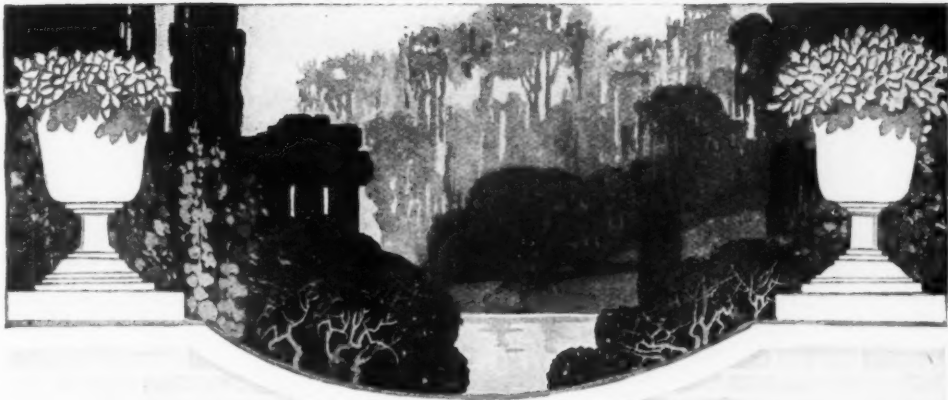


father, who was, of course, the same Lieutenant-Colonel Fordyce, C. S. A., that met his death at Gettysburg.

Colonel Paul Fordyce, I repeat, at forty-five fell genuinely in love with Miss Harriet Wadleigh, fresh from Vassar and a "finishing" tour of Europe. No lover ever gave more propitious evidence of his ardor. For it was presently notorious, *via* the *Sunday Courier-Herald*, that "the opening cotillion of the season at Whitebrier was led by Colonel Paul Fordyce of Westbrook, dancing with Miss Harriet Wadleigh, in cerise *mousseline de soie*, over taffeta, with cerise velvet, and a necklace of pearls." Not a chaperone with daughters but was as venomous as she dared to be in private converse. But Miss Wadleigh was the belle of the season.

The ensuing October David Wadleigh bought the Bellingham mansion in Lichfield, Tom Bellingham—of the Bellinghams of Assequin, not the Bellinghams of Bellemeade, who indeed immigrated after the Revolution and have never been regarded as securely established from a social standpoint—being at this time in pecuniary difficulties on account of having signed another person's name to a check. Wadleigh refurnished the house in the severest elegance. Colonel Fordyce was his mentor throughout the process; and the oldest families of Lichfield very shortly sat at table with the ex-overseer, and not at all unwillingly, since his dinners were excellent and an infatuated Paul Fordyce—an axiom now in planning any list of guests—was very shortly to marry the man's daughter.

In fact, the matter had been settled. First of all, Colonel Fordyce received from David Wadleigh an exuberantly granted charter of courtship—for the colonel would no more have thought of opening the topic with the girl herself than he would have of discussing it with his negro body-servant. And this befell upon the happiest day of David Wadleigh's existence. The banker was in business matters wonderfully shrewd, as all his life, since the signing of that half-forgotten contract whereby he was to furnish a certain number of mules for the Confederate service, strikingly attested: but he had



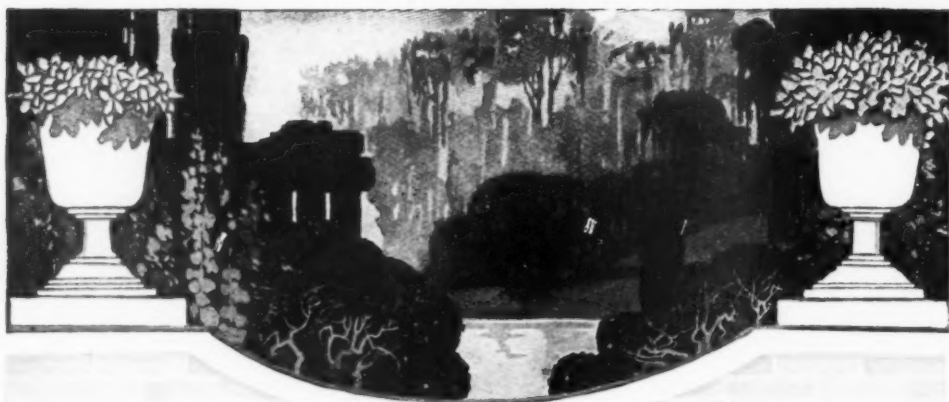
rarely been out of the State wherein his mother bore him; and where other nabobs might have dreamed of a viscount, or even have soared aspiringly in imagination toward a countess-ship for his only child, he retained in consequence an unshaken faith in the dust-gathering creed of his youth. His daughter would become by marriage a Fordyce of Westbrook, no less. His Harriet's carriage would roll up and down the avenue from which he had so often stepped aside, with an uncovered head, while gentlemen and ladies cantered by; and it would be her children that would play about the corridors of the old house at whose doors he had lived so long and never dared to enter, unsolicited—except on Christmas Day and other recognized festivities, when, dressed to the nines, the overseer and his uneasy mother, together with the slaves, by immemorial custom, made free of the mansion.

"They were good days, sir," he chuckled. "Heh, we'll stick to the old customs. We'll give a dinner and announce it at dessert, just as your honored grandfather did your Aunt Constantia's bethrothal—"

"You will perhaps pardon me," said the colonel gently, "if I venture to suggest, sir, that I am not yet so fortunate as to have the young lady's consent—"

But as a matter of course the colonel was accepted by Miss Wadleigh. His declaration, if tendered in a somewhat mannered style, was clamantly sincere; and she had long admired him more than any other man she knew. Also the girl was frankly pleased at the prospect of being the *châtelaine* of Westbrook. She had no ancestors of her own, except the dubious line of "honest and God-fearing yeomen" her father's liberal retaining-fee had caused to be traced out a brief ten years ago; and being a sensible young woman, she had no lively faith in her "authenticated" descent from Edward the Third of England—most conveniently prolific of monarchs and the demonstrable progenitor of half Lichfield.

But about the Fordyces of Westbrook there could be no question. Harriet Wadleigh had their history at her finger-



tips. She could have told you every tincture in their armorial bearings, and have explained the origin of every rampant, counter-charged, or couchant beast upon the shield. She knew it was the *Bona Nova*, in the November of 1619, which had the honor of transporting the forbear of this family into America; which scions of the race had represented this or that particular county in the House of Burgesses, and for what years; which three of them were Governors, and which had served as Officers of the State Line in the Revolution: and, in fine, seemed amply satisfied to play Penelophon to Colonel Fordyce's Cophetua. Colonel Fordyce was in a decorous fashion the happiest of living persons.

So, as a token of this, he devoted what little ready money he possessed to renovating Westbrook, where he had not lived for twenty years. He rarely thought of money, not esteeming it an altogether suitable subject for a gentleman's meditations. And to do him utter justice, the knowledge that old Wadleigh's wealth would some day be at Paul Fordyce's disposal, was never more than an agreeable minor feature of her *entourage* whenever, as was very often, Colonel Fordyce fell to thinking of how adorable Harriet Wadleigh was in every particular.

And then some frolic god, *en route* from homicide by means of an unloaded pistol in Chicago, for the demolition of a likely ship off Palos, with the coöperation of a defective piston-rod, stayed in his flight to bring Joe Parkinson to Lichfield.

It was David Wadleigh who told the colonel of this advent, as the very apex of jocularly.

"For you remember the Parkinsons, I suppose?"

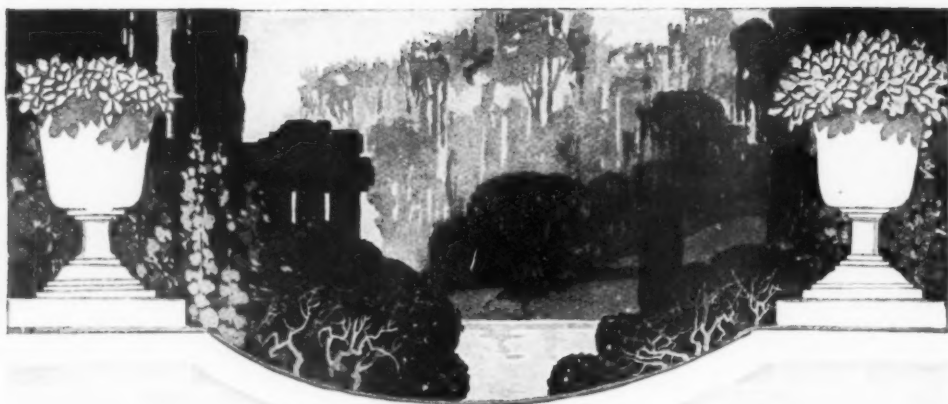
"The ones that had a cabin near Westbrook? Very deserving people, I believe."

"And *their* son, sir, wants to marry my daughter," said Mr. Wadleigh; "*my* daughter—who is shortly to be connected by marriage with the Fordyces of Westbrook! I don't know what this world will come to next."

It was a treat to see him shake his head in deprecation of



Meanwhile, Joe Parkinson was seeing Harriet Wadleigh every day



such anarchy. Then David Wadleigh said, more truculently:

"Yes, sir! on account of a boy-and-girl affair five years ago, this half-strainer, this poor-white trash, has actually had the presumption, sir—But I don't doubt that Harriet has told you all about it!"

"Why, no!" said Colonel Fordyce. "She did not mention it this afternoon. She was not feeling very well. A slight headache. I noticed she was not inclined to conversation."

"Though, mind you, I don't say anything against Joe. He's a fine young fellow. Paid his own way through college. Done good work in Panama and in Alaska, too. But, confound it, sir, the boy's a fool! Now I put it to you fairly, aint he a fool?" said Mr. Wadleigh.

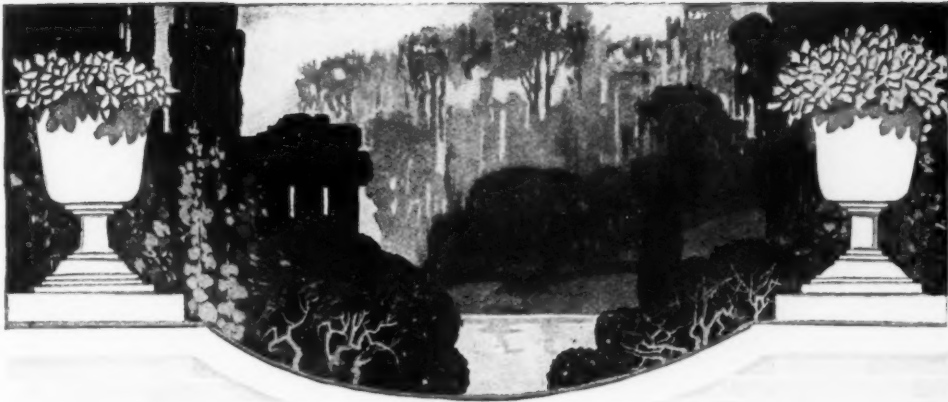
"Upon my word, sir, if the folly have no other proof than an adoration of your daughter," the colonel protested, "I must, in self-defense, beg leave to differ from you."

Then after a little further talk they separated.

Colonel Fordyce left that night for Westbrook in order to inspect the improvements which were being made there. He was to return to Lichfield on the ensuing Wednesday, when his engagement to Harriet Wadleigh was to be announced—"just as your honored grandfather did your Aunt Constantia's bethrothal."

Meanwhile, Joe Parkinson, a young man very much in love, who fought the world by ordinary, like Hal o' the Wynd, "for his own hand," was seeing Harriet Wadleigh every day.

Colonel Fordyce remained five days at Westbrook, that he might put his house in order against his nearing marriage. It was a pleasant sight to see the colonel stroll about the paneled corridors and pause to chat with divers deferential workmen who were putting the last touches there, or mid-course in a consultation with the gardeners anent the rolling of a lawn or the retrimming of a rosebush, and to mark the bearing of the man, so colored by a manifest good-will toward everything.



He joyed in his old home—in the hipped roof of it, the mullioned casements, the wide window-seats, the high and spacious rooms, the geometrical gardens and broad lawns, in all that was quaint and beautiful at Westbrook—because it would be hers so very soon: the lovely frame of a yet lovelier picture, as the colonel phrased it with an unwonted flight of imagery. Gravely he inspected the portraits of his feminine ancestors, that he might decide, as one quite without bias, whether Westbrook had ever boasted a more delectable mistress. Equity—or in his fond eyes, at least—demanded a negation. Only in one of these old canvases—a counterfeit of Miss Evelyn Ramsay, born a Ramsay of Blenheim, that had married the colonel's great-grandfather, Major Orlando Fordyce, an aide-de-camp to General Charles Lee in the Revolution—Paul Fordyce found, or seemed to find, an odd likeness to Harriet Wadleigh.

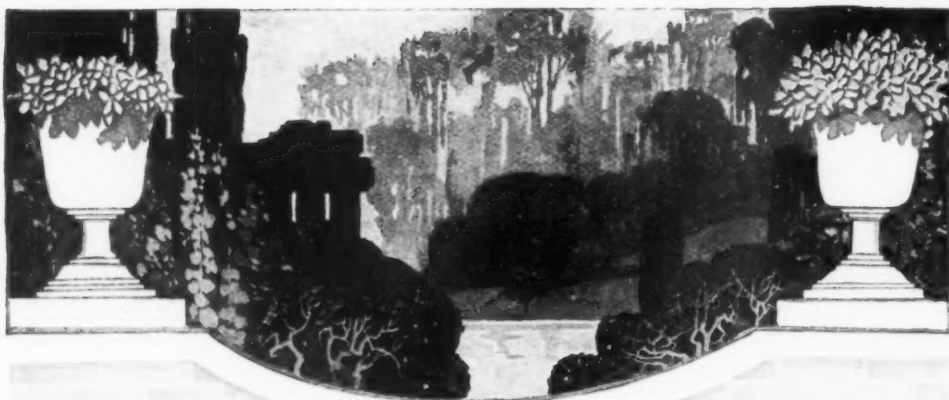
He spent much time before this portrait. Yes, this woman had been lovely in her day. And this bright, roguish shadow of her was lovely, too, eternally postured in white paint, trimmed with a vine of rose-colored satin leaves, a pink rose in her powdered hair and one white ostrich plume as well.

Yet it was an adamantean colonel that remarked:

"My dear, perhaps it's just as well that you have quitted Westbrook. For I've heard tales of you, Miss Ramsay. No; I do not think that you'd have taken kindly to any young person—not even in the guise of a great-granddaughter-in-law—to whom you cannot hold a candle, madam. A *fico* for you, madam," said the most undutiful of great-grandsons.

Let us leave him to his roseate meditations. Questionless, in the woman he loved there was much of his own invention: but the circumstance is not unhackneyed; and Colonel Fordyce was in a decorous fashion the happiest of living persons.

Meanwhile, Joe Parkinson, a young man very much in love, who fought the world by ordinary, like Hal o' the Wynd, "for his own hand," was seeing Harriet Wadleigh every day.



Joe Parkinson—tall and broad-shouldered, tanned, resolute, chary of speech, decisive in gesture, having close-cropped yellow hair and frank, keen eyes like amethysts—was the one stranger present, when Colonel Fordyce came again into David Wadleigh's fine and choicely furnished mansion. For this was on the evening David Wadleigh gave the long anticipated dinner at which he was to announce his daughter's engagement. As much, indeed, was suspected by most of his dinner-company, so carefully selected from the aristocracy of Lichfield; and the heart of the ex-overseer, as these handsome, courtly, sweet-voiced people settled according to their rank about his sumptuous table, was aglow with pride.

Then Colonel Fordyce turned to his companion and said softly: "My dear, you are like a wraith. What is it?"

"I have a headache," said Miss Wadleigh. "It is nothing."

"You reassure me," the colonel gayly declared, "for I had feared it was a heartache—"

She faced him. Desperation looked out of her brown eyes.

"It is," the girl said swiftly.

"Ah—"

Only it was an intake of the breath, rather than an interjection. Colonel Fordyce of Westbrook ate his fish with deliberation.

"Young Parkinson?" he presently suggested.

"I thought I had forgotten him. I didn't know I cared—I didn't know I *could* care so much—"

And there was a note in her voice which thrust the poor colonel into an abyss of consternation.

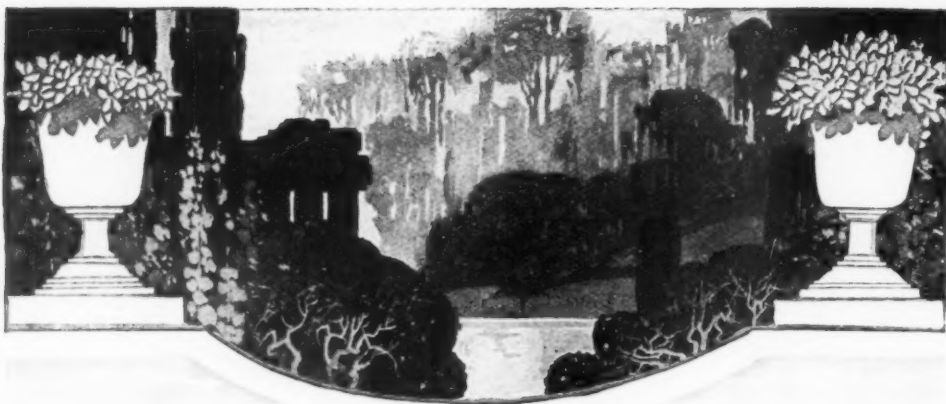
"Remember that these people are your guests," he said, in perfect earnest.

"—and I refused him this afternoon for the last time, and he is going away to-morrow—"

But here Judge Allardyce broke in, to tell Miss Wadleigh of the genuine pleasure with which he had *nolle prosequi* the case against Tom Bellingham.



Colonel Fordyce of Westbrook rose quickly to his feet



"A son of my old schoolmate, ma'am," the judge explained. "A Bellingham of Assequin. Oh, indiscreet of course—but, God bless my soul! when were the Bellinghams anything else? The boy regretted it as much as anybody."

And she listened with an almost morbid curiosity concerning the finer details of legal intricacy.

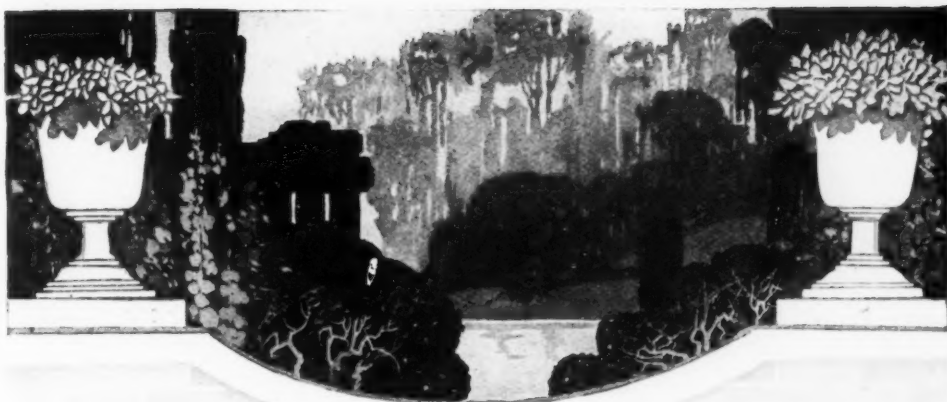
Colonel Fordyce was mid-course in an anecdote which the lady upon the other side of him found excruciatingly amusing. He was very gay. He had presently secured the attention of the company at large, and held it through a good half-hour; for by common consent Paul Fordyce was at his best to-night, and Lichfield found his best worth listening to.

"Grinning old popinjay!" thought Mr. Parkinson; and he envied him and internally noted, and with an unholy fervor cursed the adroitness of intonation and the discreetly modulated gesture with which the colonel gave to every point of his merry-Andrewing its precise value.

Then, as old David Wadleigh stirred in his chair and broke into a wide premonitory smile, Colonel Fordyce of Westbrook rose quickly to his feet. And of that company Nannie Allsotts at least thought of how like he was to the boy who had fought the famous duel with George Allsotts a whole quarter of a century ago.

Ensued a quite felicitous speech.

Colonel Fordyce alluded briefly to the pleasure which he took in addressing such a gathering. He believed no other State in the Union could have afforded an assembly of more distinguished men and fairer women. But the fact was not unnatural; they might recall the venerable saying that blood will tell? Well, it was their peculiar privilege to represent to-day that sturdy stock which, when this great republic was in the pangs of birth, had, with sword and pen and oratory, discomfited the hirelings of England and given to history the undying names of several Revolutionary patriots—all of which he enumerated with the customary pause after each cognomen, to allow for the customary applause.

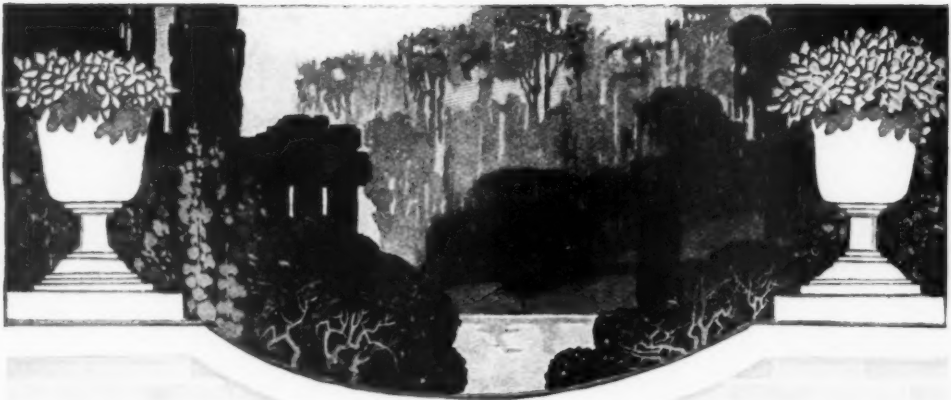


And theirs, too, was the blood of those heroic men who fought more recently beneath the stars and bars, as bravely, he made bold to say, as Leonidas at Thermopylæ, in defense of their beloved Southland. Right, he conceded, had not triumphed here. For hordes of soldiery had invaded the fertile soil, the tempest of war had swept the land and left it devastated. The South lay battered and bruised, and prostrate in blood, the "Niobe of nations," as sad a victim of ingratitude as King Lear. The colonel touched upon the time when buzzards in the guise of carpet-baggers had battered upon the recumbent form; and spoke slightly of divers persons of antiquity as compared with various Confederate leaders, all of whose names were greeted in an uproar of enthusiasm.

But the South, and in particular the grand old commonwealth which they inhabited, he stated, had not long sat among the ruins of her temples, like a sorrowing priestess with veiled eyes and a depressed soul, mourning for that which had been. Like the fabled Phœnix, she had risen from the ashes of her past. To-day she was once more to be seen in her hereditary position, the brightest gem in all that glorious galaxy of States which made America the envy of every other nation: her battle-fields converted into building lots, tall factories smoked where once a holocaust had flamed, and where the cannon roared you heard to-day the tinkle of the school-bell. Such progress was without a parallel. Nor was there any need for him, he was assured, to mention the imperishable names of their dear homeland's poets and statesmen of to-day, the orators and philanthropists and prominent business men who jostled one another in her splendid, new asphalted streets, since all were quite familiar to his audience.

In fine, by a quite natural series of transitions, Colonel Fordyce thus worked around to "the very pleasing duty with which our host, in view of the long and intimate connection between our families, has seen fit to honor me"—which was, it developed, to announce the imminent marriage of Miss Harriet Wadleigh and Mr. Joseph Parkinson.

I think that everyone was much surprised.



Old Wadleigh had half risen, with a purple face. The colonel viewed him with a look of bland interrogation. There was silence for a heart-beat.

Then Wadleigh lowered his eyes, if just because the laws of caste had triumphed, and in consequence his glance crossed that of his daughter, who sat quite motionless, regarding him. She was a very beautiful girl, and he had always been inordinately proud of her. It was not pride she seemed to beg for now. This Harriet was not the fine daughter the old man was sometimes half afraid of, through that moment. She was, too, like the daughter of a certain mountaineer who had hastily put aside her blue-checked sunbonnet and looked at young David Wadleigh in much this fashion very long ago, because the minister was coming down-stairs and they would presently be man and wife—provided always her pursuing brothers did not arrive in time. Old David Wadleigh cleared his throat. Old David Wadleigh said, half sheepishly:

"My foot's asleep, that's all. I beg everybody's pardon, I'm sure. Please go on—"

He had come within an ace of saying "Mr. Paul;" and only in the nick of time did he continue "Colonel Fordyce."

So the colonel went on in a time-hallowed form, with many happy allusions to Mr. Parkinson's anterior success as an engineer before he came "like a young Lochinvar to wrest away his beautiful and popular *fiancée* from us faint-hearted fellows of Lichfield;" touched, of course, upon the colonel's personal comminglement of envy and rage and so on, as an old bachelor who saw too late all that he had missed in life; and concluded by proposing the health of the young couple.

This was drunk with all the honors.

Upon what Harriet Wadleigh said to the colonel in the drawing-room, what Joe Parkinson blurted out in the hall, and, chief of all, what David Wadleigh asseverated to Paul Fordyce in the library, after the other guests had gone, I do not dwell in this place. To each of these, in various fashions,



"To this new South that has not any longer need of me or of my kind"



did Colonel Fordyce explain such reasons as had seemed to him sufficient cause for acting as he had done; but candidly, and with a touch of eloquence even, to David Wadleigh.

"You are like your grandfather, sir, at times," the latter said, inconsequently enough, when the colonel had finished.

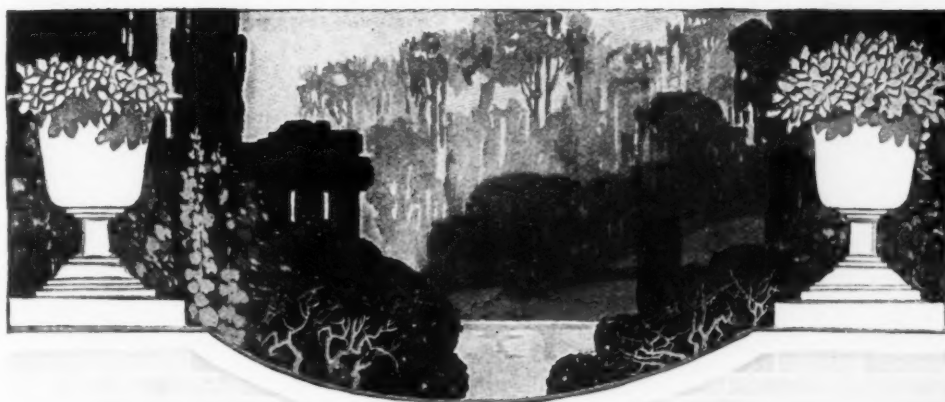
And Paul Fordyce gave a little bowing gesture, with an entire gravity. He knew it was the highest tribute that Wadleigh could pay to any man.

"She's a daughter any father might be proud of," said the banker, also. He removed his cigar from his mouth and looked at it critically. "She's rather like her mother sometimes," he said carelessly. "Her mother made a runaway match, you may remember—Damn poor cigar, this. But no, you wouldn't, I reckon. I had branched out into cotton then, and had a little place just outside of Fairhaven—"

So that, all in all, Colonel Fordyce returned to his rooms not entirely dissatisfied.

He sat a long while before his fire that night. The room seemed less comfortable than he had ever known it. So many of his books and pictures and other furnishings had been already carried to Westbrook that the walls were a little bare. Also there was a formidable pile of bills upon the table by him—from contractors and upholsterers and furniture-houses and so on, concerned in the late renovation of Westbrook—the heralds of a host he hardly saw his way to deal with.

He had flung away a vast amount of money that evening, with something which to him was dearer. Had you attempted to condole with him he would not have understood you. "But what would you have had a gentleman do, sir?" a Fordyce of Westbrook would have said in real perplexity. No, it was not sorrow that he felt, rather it was contentment when he remembered the girl's present happiness; and what alone depressed the colonel's courtly affability toward the universe at large was this queer, horrible new sense of being somehow out of touch with yesterday's so comfortable world, of being out-moded, of being almost old.



"Eh, well!" he said, "I'm of a certain age undoubtedly."

By an odd turn the colonel thought of how his friends—the friends of his own class and generation—had genuinely admired the after-dinner speech which he had made that evening. And he smiled, but very tenderly, because they were all men and women whom he loved.

"The most of us have known each other for a long while. The most of us, in fact, are of a certain age . . . I think no people ever met the sorry problem that we faced. For we were born the masters of a leisured, ordered world; and by a tragic quirk of destiny were thrust into a quite new planet where we were for a while the inferiors, and after that just the competitors, of yesterday's slaves.

"We couldn't meet the new conditions. Oh, for the love of heaven, let us be quite frank and confess that we of Lichfield *haven't* met them as things practical go. We had not the training for it. A man who has not been taught to swim may rationally be excused for preferring to sit upon the bank; and should he elect to diversify his idleness by protestations that he is self-evident an excellent swimmer because once upon a time his progenitors were the only people in the world who had the slightest conception of how to perform a natorial masterpiece, the thing is simply human nature.

"And yet we haven't done so badly. For the most part we of Lichfield have sat upon the bank our whole lives long. We have produced nothing—after all—which was absolutely earth-staggering; and we *have* talked a deal of clap-trap. But, meanwhile, we have at least enhanced the comeliness of our particular sand-bar. And we have lived a cleanly, courteous, and honest life thereon, just as our fathers taught us. It may be—in the final outcome of things—that will be found an even finer pursuit than the old one of producing Presidents. Besides, we have produced ourselves. We have been gentlefolk in spite of all, we have been true to the tradition of our race, we have defiantly embroidered life, and indomitably we have converted the commonest happening of



life into a comely thing. We have been artists if not artisans."

There was upon the table a large photograph in sepia of Harriet Wadleigh. He studied this now. She was very beautiful, he thought.

"'Nor thou detain her vesture's hem—'" said the colonel aloud. "Oh, that infernal Yankee understood, even though he *was* born in Boston!" And this, as coming from Colonel Fordyce, may fairly be considered as a sweeping tribute to the author of *Give All to Love*.

Colonel Fordyce was intent upon the portrait. So! she had chosen at last between himself and this young fellow, a workman born of workmen, who went about the world building bridges and canals and tunnels and such in those far countries which were to Colonel Fordyce just so many gray or pink or fawn-colored splotches on the map. It seemed to Colonel Fordyce almost an allegory.

So Colonel Fordyce filled a glass with the famed Lafayette Madeira of Westbrook, and solemnly drank yet another toast.

"To the new South," he said. "To this new South that has not any longer need of me or of my kind.

"To this new South! She does not gaze unwillingly, nor too complacently, upon old years, and dares concede that but with loss of manliness may any man encroach upon the heritage of a dog or of a trotting-horse, and consider the exploits of an ancestor to guarantee an innate and personal excellence.

"For to her all former glory is less a jewel than a touchstone, and with her portion of it daily she appraises her own doing, and without vain speech. And her high past unparalleled she values now in chief as fit foundation of that edifice whereon she labors day by day, and with augmenting strokes."

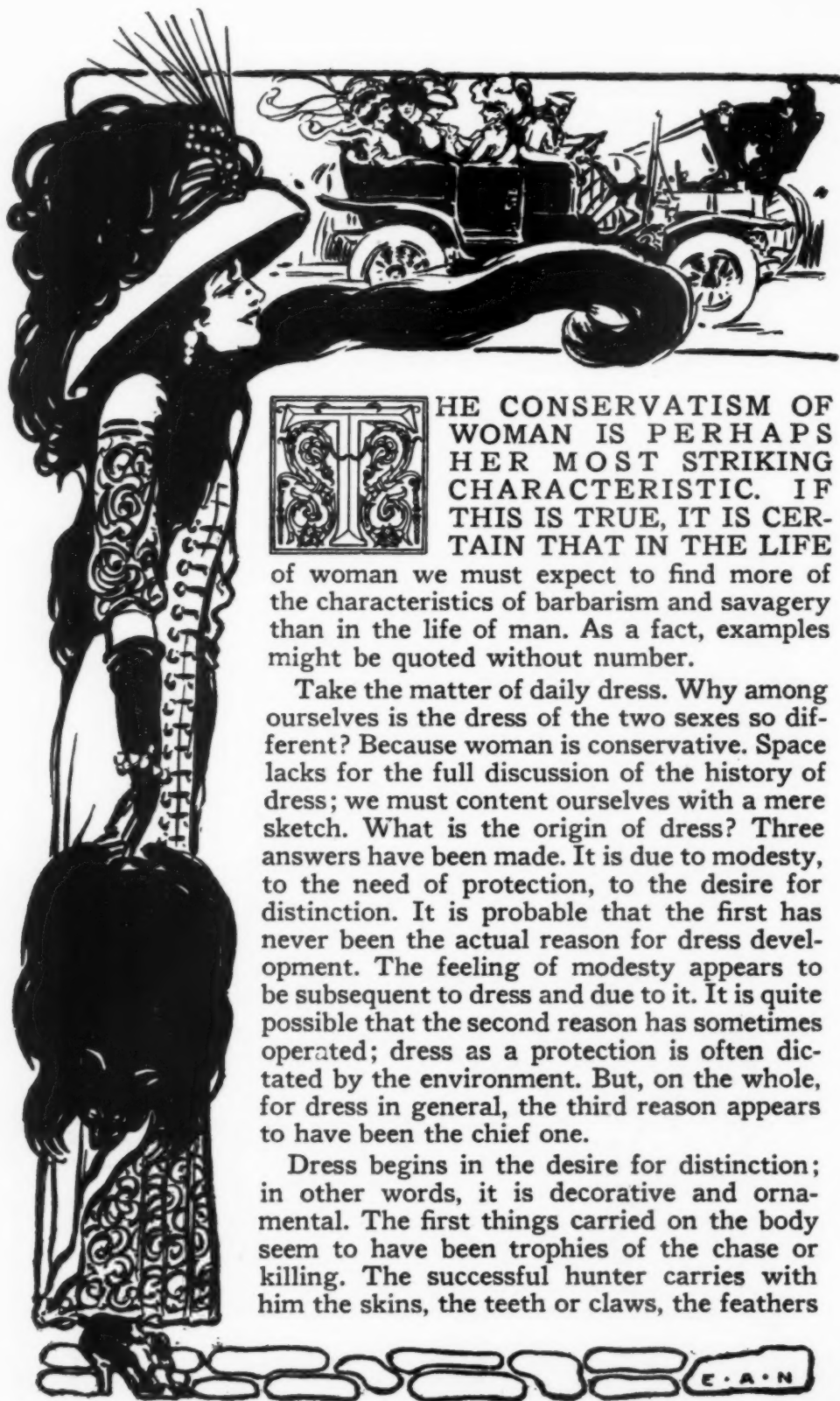
And yet: "It may be he will serve you better. But, oh, it isn't possible that he should love you more than I," said Colonel Fordyce of Westbrook.

In Ye Olde Print Shop



The Women Men HARRY
By Professor Frederick Starr



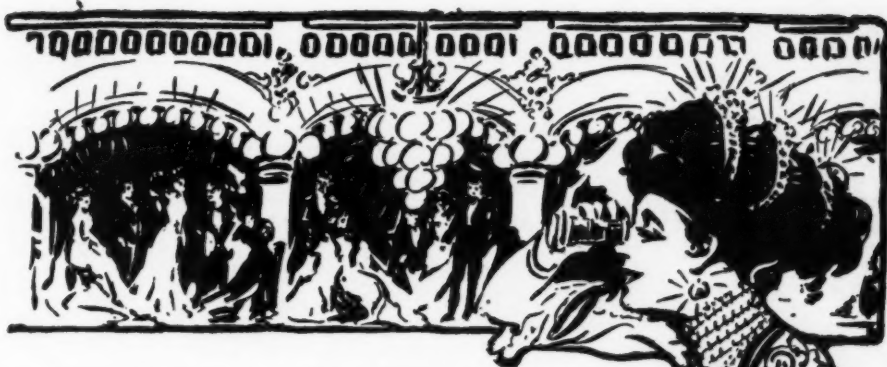


HE CONSERVATISM OF WOMAN IS PERHAPS HER MOST STRIKING CHARACTERISTIC. IF THIS IS TRUE, IT IS CERTAIN THAT IN THE LIFE

of woman we must expect to find more of the characteristics of barbarism and savagery than in the life of man. As a fact, examples might be quoted without number.

Take the matter of daily dress. Why among ourselves is the dress of the two sexes so different? Because woman is conservative. Space lacks for the full discussion of the history of dress; we must content ourselves with a mere sketch. What is the origin of dress? Three answers have been made. It is due to modesty, to the need of protection, to the desire for distinction. It is probable that the first has never been the actual reason for dress development. The feeling of modesty appears to be subsequent to dress and due to it. It is quite possible that the second reason has sometimes operated; dress as a protection is often dictated by the environment. But, on the whole, for dress in general, the third reason appears to have been the chief one.

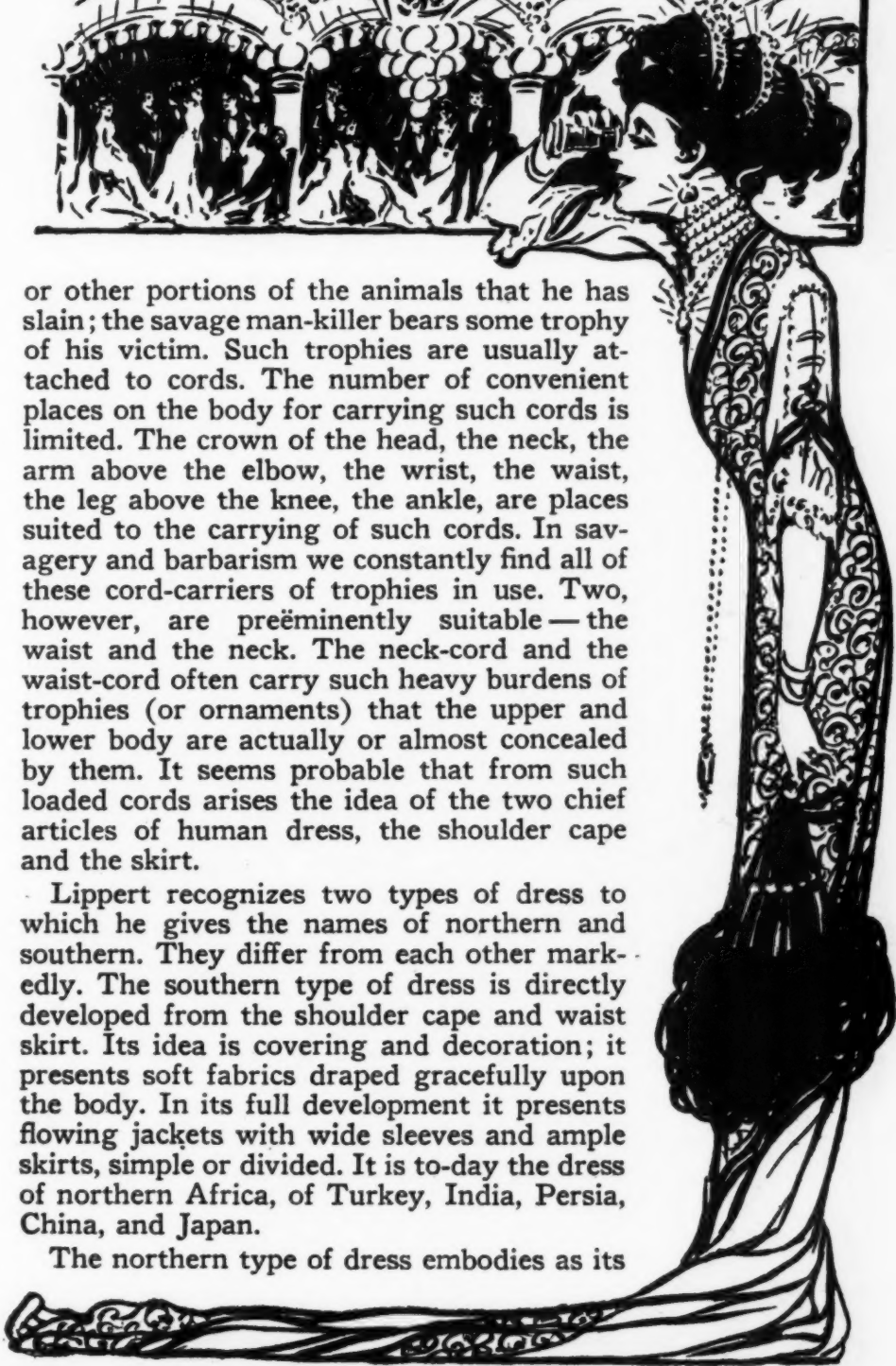
Dress begins in the desire for distinction; in other words, it is decorative and ornamental. The first things carried on the body seem to have been trophies of the chase or killing. The successful hunter carries with him the skins, the teeth or claws, the feathers



or other portions of the animals that he has slain; the savage man-killer bears some trophy of his victim. Such trophies are usually attached to cords. The number of convenient places on the body for carrying such cords is limited. The crown of the head, the neck, the arm above the elbow, the wrist, the waist, the leg above the knee, the ankle, are places suited to the carrying of such cords. In savagery and barbarism we constantly find all of these cord-carriers of trophies in use. Two, however, are preëminently suitable—the waist and the neck. The neck-cord and the waist-cord often carry such heavy burdens of trophies (or ornaments) that the upper and lower body are actually or almost concealed by them. It seems probable that from such loaded cords arises the idea of the two chief articles of human dress, the shoulder cape and the skirt.

Lippert recognizes two types of dress to which he gives the names of northern and southern. They differ from each other markedly. The southern type of dress is directly developed from the shoulder cape and waist skirt. Its idea is covering and decoration; it presents soft fabrics draped gracefully upon the body. In its full development it presents flowing jackets with wide sleeves and ample skirts, simple or divided. It is to-day the dress of northern Africa, of Turkey, India, Persia, China, and Japan.

The northern type of dress embodies as its





chief idea convenience and practicality; the ornamental origin is lost sight of; it includes the skin clothing of the Eskimos and the protective idea is evident. Its forms are due to the tight tying of skins or stuffs around the different portions of the body. Its typical forms are close fitting jackets and trousers. At one time and one place these two types of dress came into vigorous competition. The ancient Greeks and Romans wore the southern type of dress—loose, graceful, ornamental; men and women dressed much alike. The barbarians from the north wore the more practical and convenient garments of protection. When Rome fell the ancient dress gave way so far as the men were concerned to the more convenient garments from the north; but conservative woman clung to the old southern type.

It would be, however, a great mistake to assume that woman only is conservative. The draped dress of ancient Rome remains in use among a certain class of men. Of all men the ecclesiastic is conservative. We may find many a survival of the past in the life of woman, but we find quite as many in the life of the priest. Just as woman in her conservatism refuses to give up the dress to which she is accustomed, so the religious leaders in the old church of Rome clung to the Roman dress, and to-day, in the characteristic gowns of clergy, acolytes, choir-boys, etc., we see the survival of ancient times. So, too, the uni-

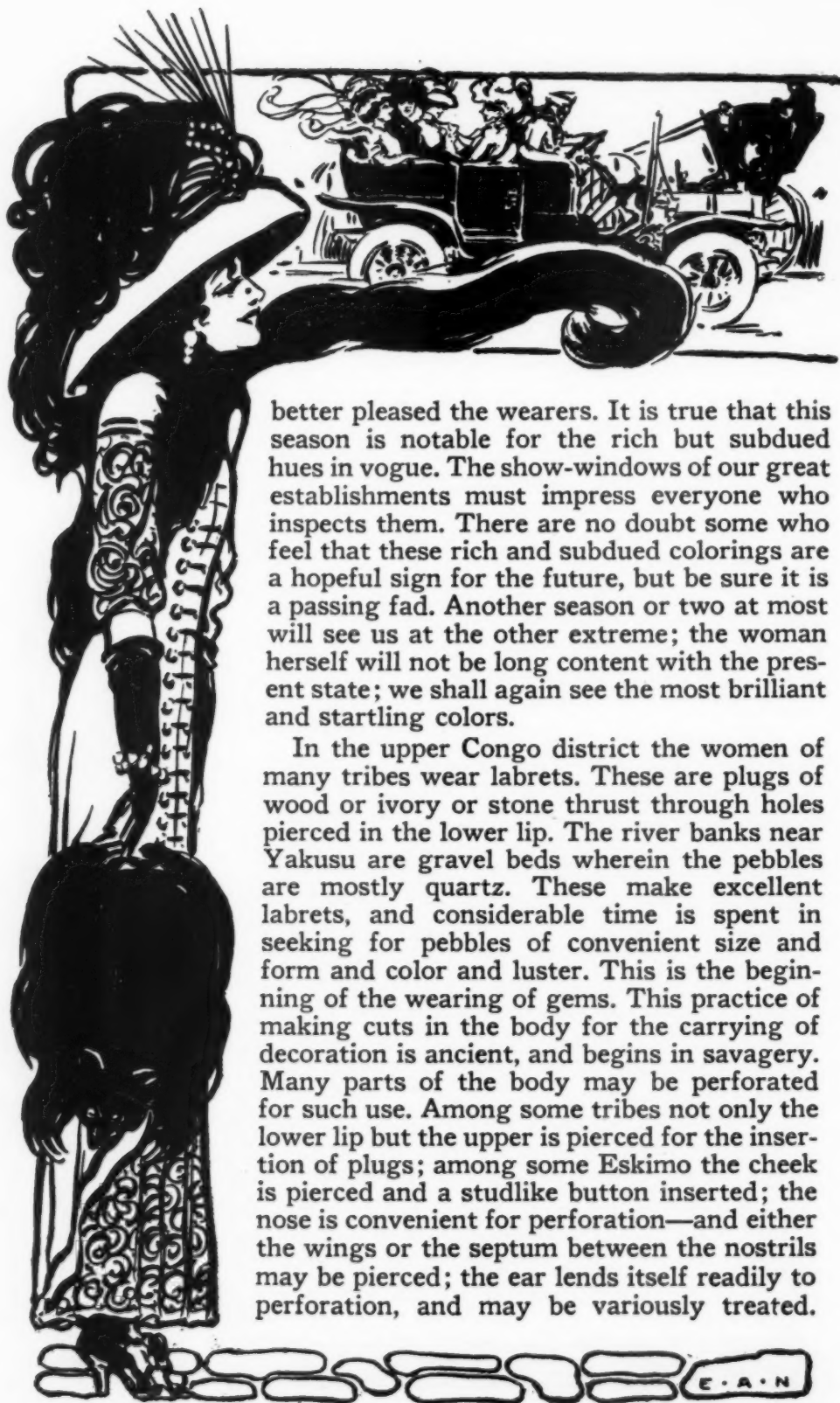


versity gown is pure survival. The world at large looks upon the universities as progressive; in the very nature of things they are centers of conservatism. There was a time when all the universities of Europe were manned by members of the religious body, and the priestly dress was naturally also the dress of faculty and students.

The toga of the old Roman was indeed far from savagery. The mere form of woman's dress to-day, while illustrating an interesting survival, is far from savagery; but in her fondness for genuine trophies, for evidence of slaughter and bloodshed, woman's savagery is still more notable. The other day, upon the street car, one woman's hat had breasts of fourteen birds set upright side by side as decorations. Outside of a few admittedly primitive communities, in our land to-day the wearing of furs and skins by men has passed away, but women still love to load themselves with the pelts of seals and minks and lynxes. The more realistic the fact of death is made, the better on the whole the women seem to be suited. The head of the killed animal adds to the attractiveness of many of these trophy decorations. The wearing of feathers and breasts of birds is an example of woman's fondness for bright colors, a characteristic trait in savages.

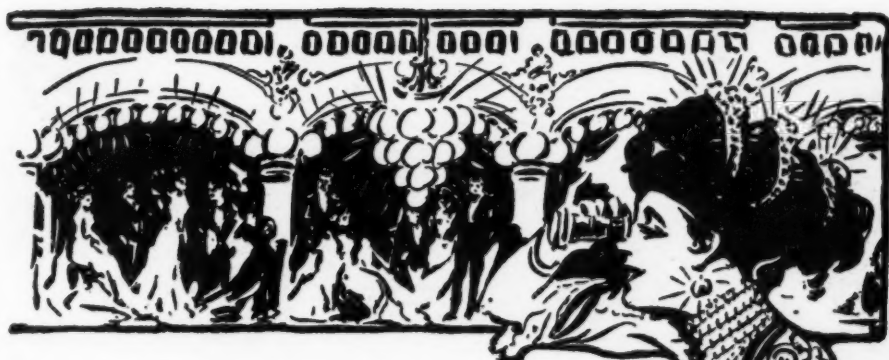
This shows itself of course also in the fabrics used for women's dress. On the whole, the more brilliant and striking these are, the





better pleased the wearers. It is true that this season is notable for the rich but subdued hues in vogue. The show-windows of our great establishments must impress everyone who inspects them. There are no doubt some who feel that these rich and subdued colorings are a hopeful sign for the future, but be sure it is a passing fad. Another season or two at most will see us at the other extreme; the woman herself will not be long content with the present state; we shall again see the most brilliant and startling colors.

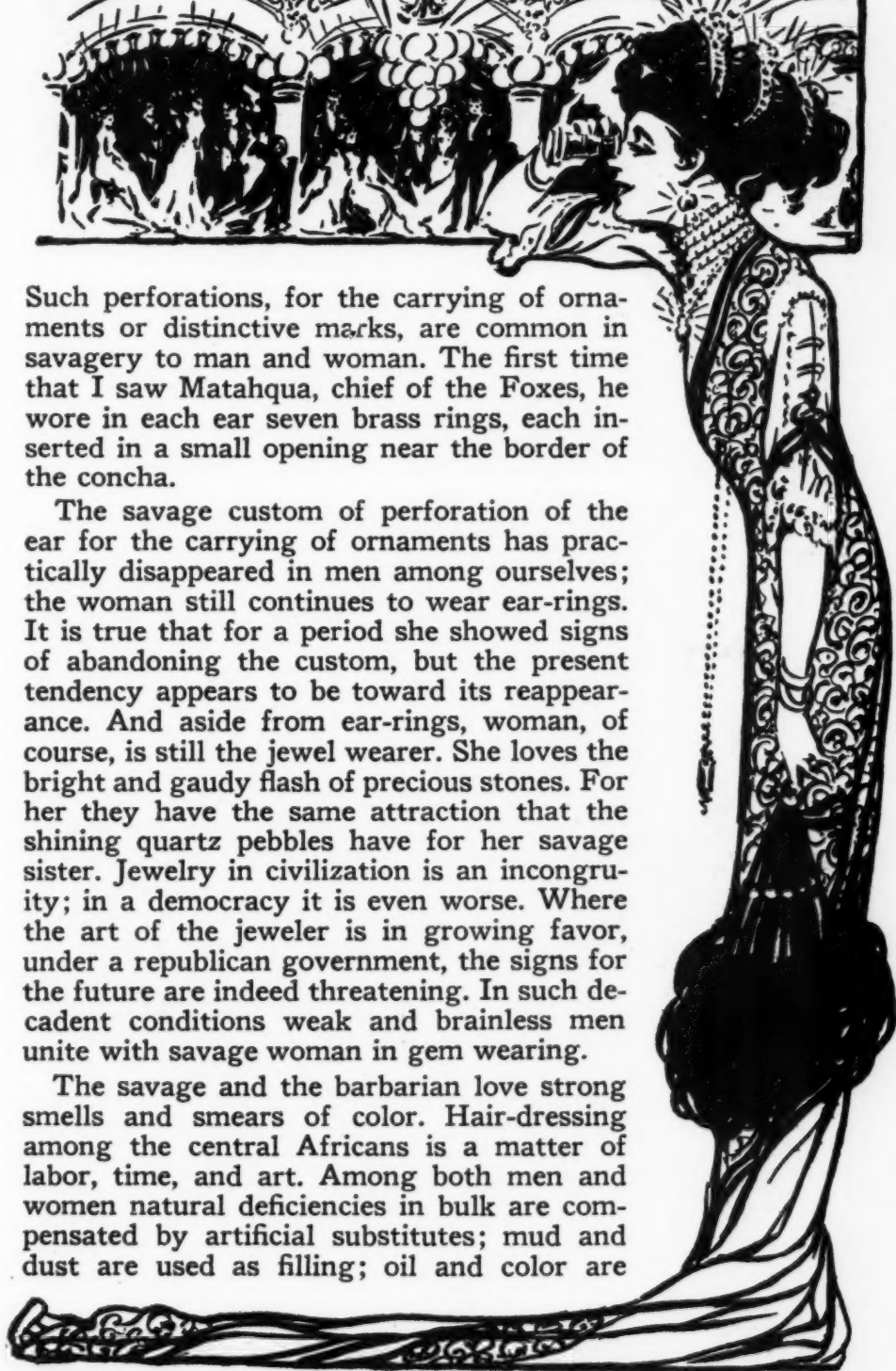
In the upper Congo district the women of many tribes wear labrets. These are plugs of wood or ivory or stone thrust through holes pierced in the lower lip. The river banks near Yakusu are gravel beds wherein the pebbles are mostly quartz. These make excellent labrets, and considerable time is spent in seeking for pebbles of convenient size and form and color and luster. This is the beginning of the wearing of gems. This practice of making cuts in the body for the carrying of decoration is ancient, and begins in savagery. Many parts of the body may be perforated for such use. Among some tribes not only the lower lip but the upper is pierced for the insertion of plugs; among some Eskimo the cheek is pierced and a studlike button inserted; the nose is convenient for perforation—and either the wings or the septum between the nostrils may be pierced; the ear lends itself readily to perforation, and may be variously treated.

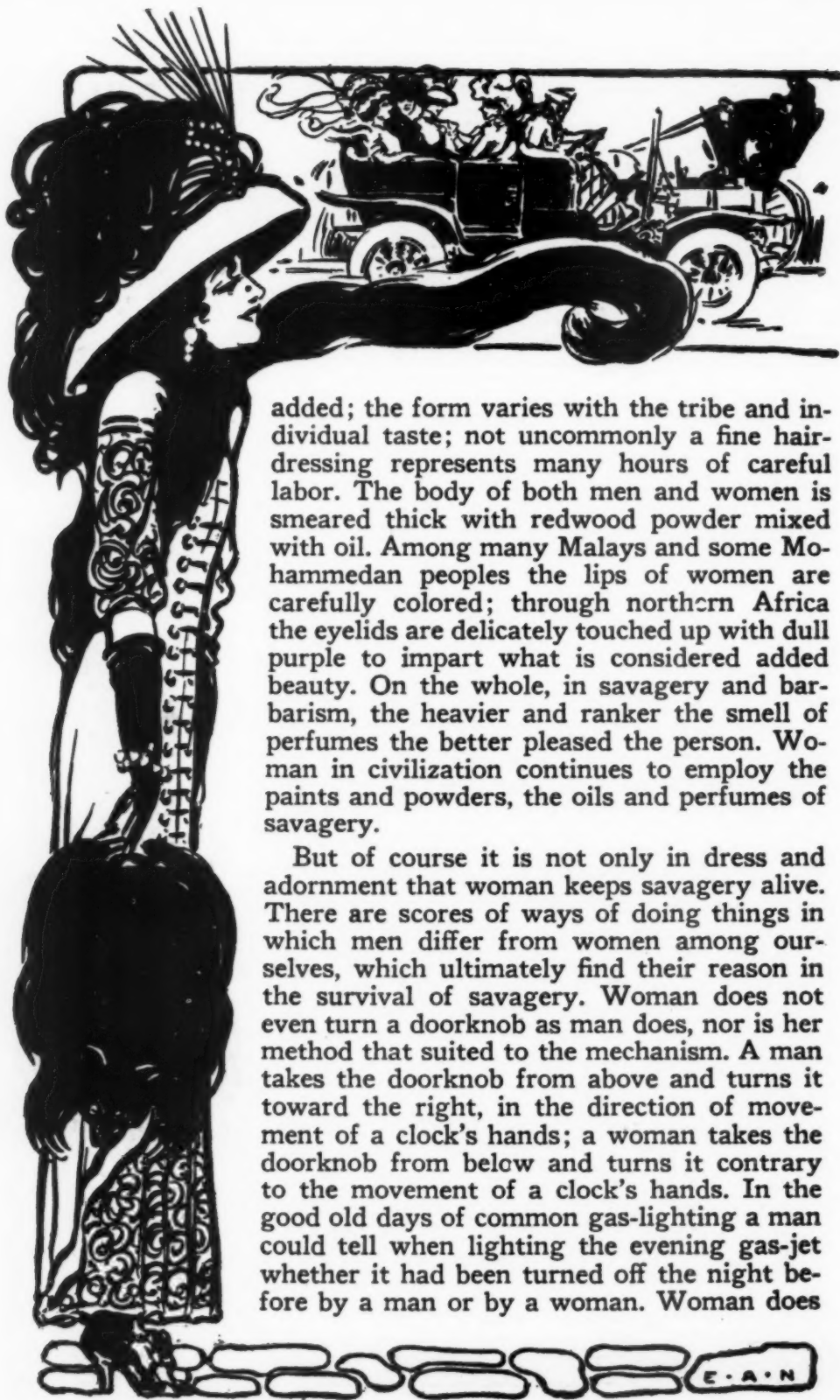


Such perforations, for the carrying of ornaments or distinctive marks, are common in savagery to man and woman. The first time that I saw Matahqua, chief of the Foxes, he wore in each ear seven brass rings, each inserted in a small opening near the border of the concha.

The savage custom of perforation of the ear for the carrying of ornaments has practically disappeared in men among ourselves; the woman still continues to wear ear-rings. It is true that for a period she showed signs of abandoning the custom, but the present tendency appears to be toward its reappearance. And aside from ear-rings, woman, of course, is still the jewel wearer. She loves the bright and gaudy flash of precious stones. For her they have the same attraction that the shining quartz pebbles have for her savage sister. Jewelry in civilization is an incongruity; in a democracy it is even worse. Where the art of the jeweler is in growing favor, under a republican government, the signs for the future are indeed threatening. In such decadent conditions weak and brainless men unite with savage woman in gem wearing.

The savage and the barbarian love strong smells and smears of color. Hair-dressing among the central Africans is a matter of labor, time, and art. Among both men and women natural deficiencies in bulk are compensated by artificial substitutes; mud and dust are used as filling; oil and color are





added; the form varies with the tribe and individual taste; not uncommonly a fine hair-dressing represents many hours of careful labor. The body of both men and women is smeared thick with redwood powder mixed with oil. Among many Malays and some Mohammedan peoples the lips of women are carefully colored; through northern Africa the eyelids are delicately touched up with dull purple to impart what is considered added beauty. On the whole, in savagery and barbarism, the heavier and ranker the smell of perfumes the better pleased the person. Woman in civilization continues to employ the paints and powders, the oils and perfumes of savagery.

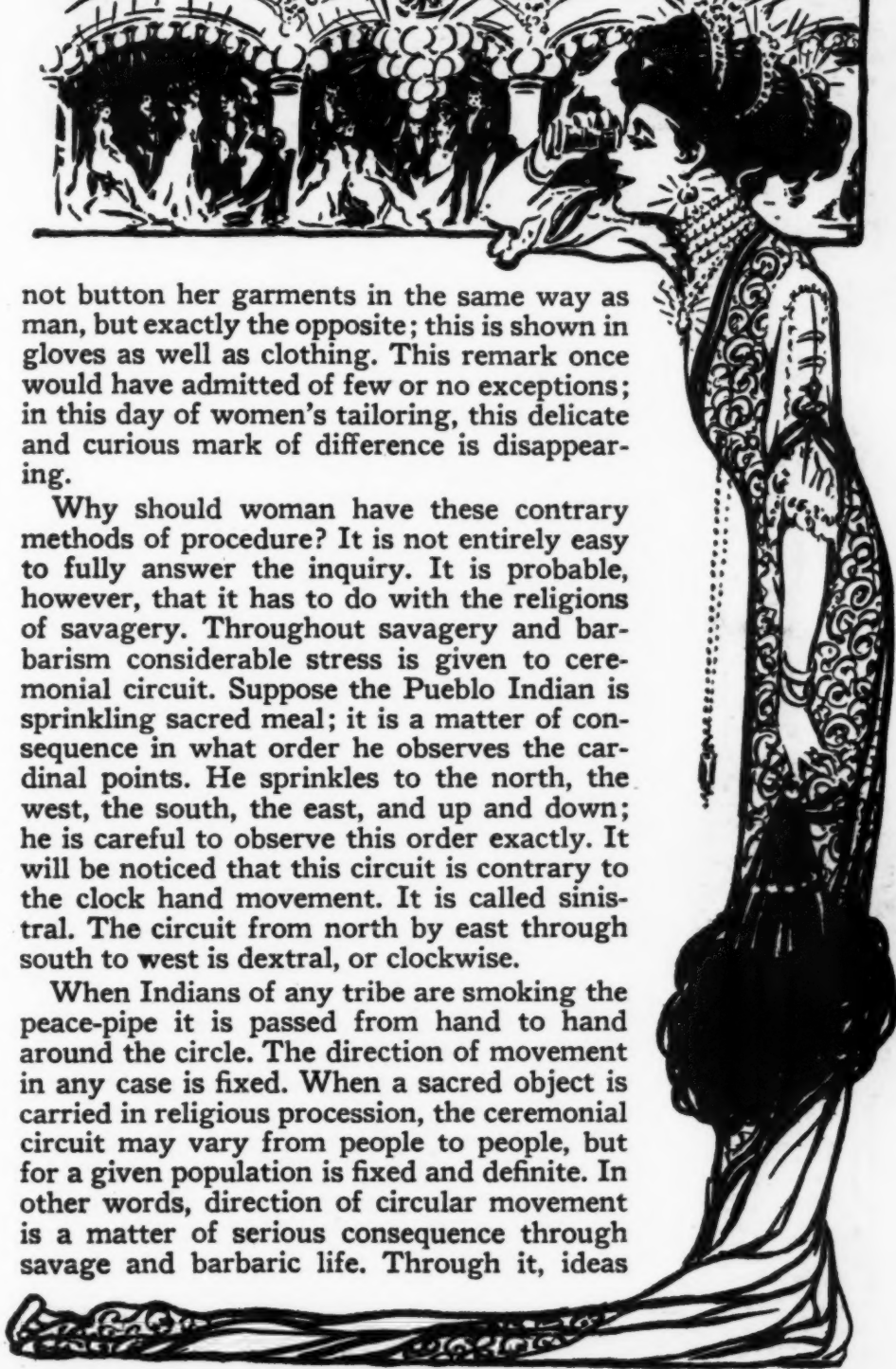
But of course it is not only in dress and adornment that woman keeps savagery alive. There are scores of ways of doing things in which men differ from women among ourselves, which ultimately find their reason in the survival of savagery. Woman does not even turn a doorknob as man does, nor is her method that suited to the mechanism. A man takes the doorknob from above and turns it toward the right, in the direction of movement of a clock's hands; a woman takes the doorknob from below and turns it contrary to the movement of a clock's hands. In the good old days of common gas-lighting a man could tell when lighting the evening gas-jet whether it had been turned off the night before by a man or by a woman. Woman does

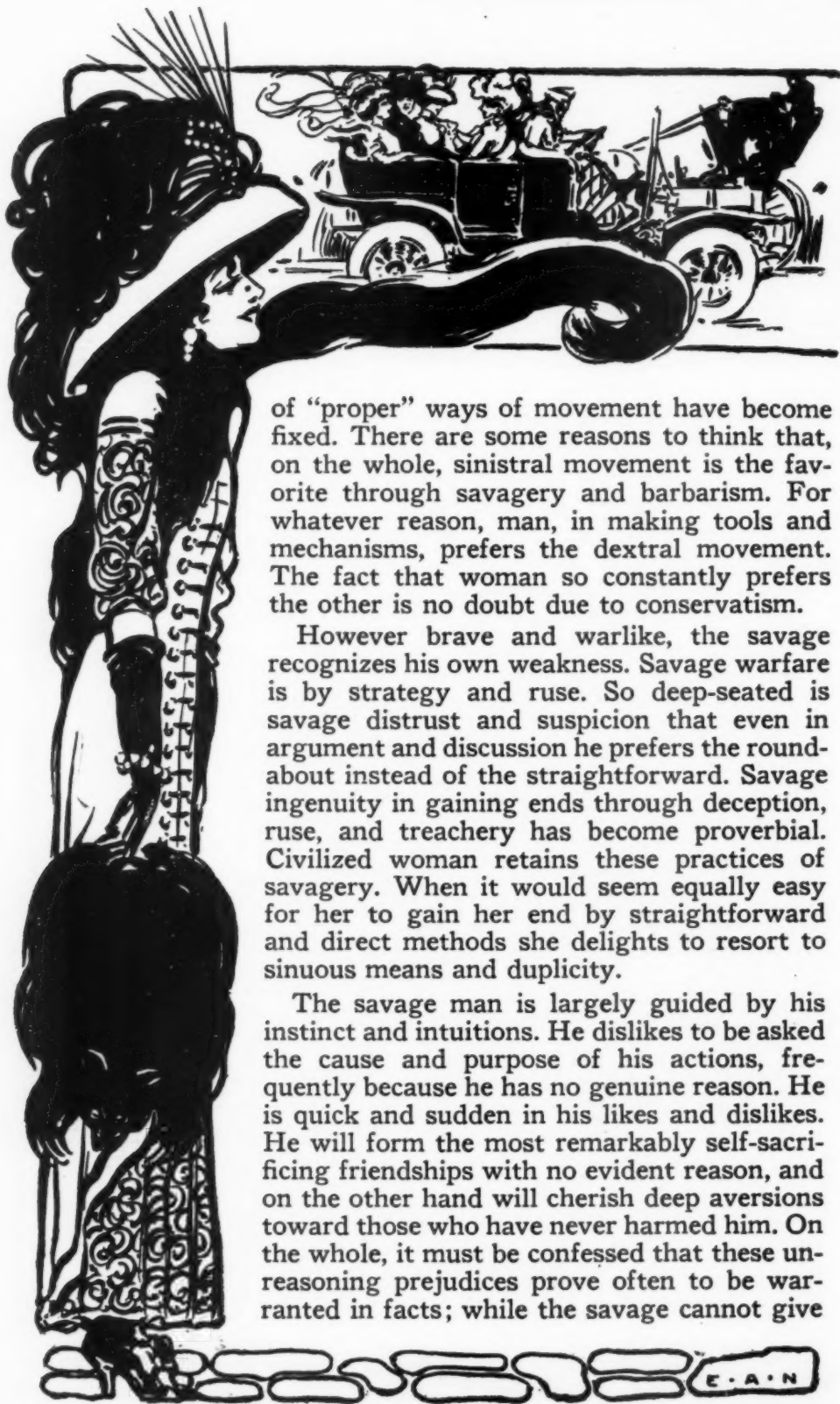


not button her garments in the same way as man, but exactly the opposite; this is shown in gloves as well as clothing. This remark once would have admitted of few or no exceptions; in this day of women's tailoring, this delicate and curious mark of difference is disappearing.

Why should woman have these contrary methods of procedure? It is not entirely easy to fully answer the inquiry. It is probable, however, that it has to do with the religions of savagery. Throughout savagery and barbarism considerable stress is given to ceremonial circuit. Suppose the Pueblo Indian is sprinkling sacred meal; it is a matter of consequence in what order he observes the cardinal points. He sprinkles to the north, the west, the south, the east, and up and down; he is careful to observe this order exactly. It will be noticed that this circuit is contrary to the clock hand movement. It is called sinistral. The circuit from north by east through south to west is dextral, or clockwise.

When Indians of any tribe are smoking the peace-pipe it is passed from hand to hand around the circle. The direction of movement in any case is fixed. When a sacred object is carried in religious procession, the ceremonial circuit may vary from people to people, but for a given population is fixed and definite. In other words, direction of circular movement is a matter of serious consequence through savage and barbaric life. Through it, ideas





of "proper" ways of movement have become fixed. There are some reasons to think that, on the whole, sinistral movement is the favorite through savagery and barbarism. For whatever reason, man, in making tools and mechanisms, prefers the dextral movement. The fact that woman so constantly prefers the other is no doubt due to conservatism.

However brave and warlike, the savage recognizes his own weakness. Savage warfare is by strategy and ruse. So deep-seated is savage distrust and suspicion that even in argument and discussion he prefers the round-about instead of the straightforward. Savage ingenuity in gaining ends through deception, ruse, and treachery has become proverbial. Civilized woman retains these practices of savagery. When it would seem equally easy for her to gain her end by straightforward and direct methods she delights to resort to sinuous means and duplicity.

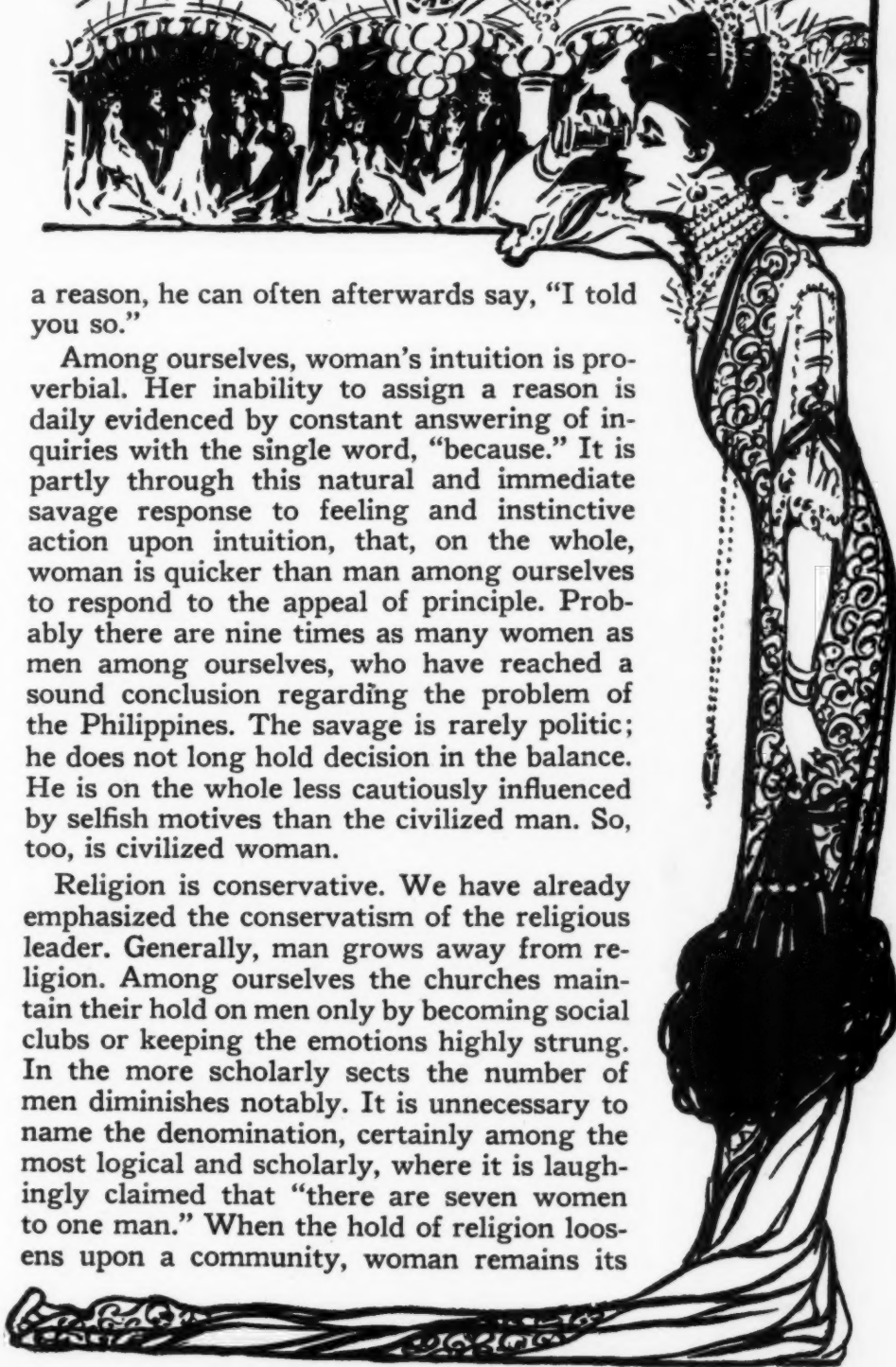
The savage man is largely guided by his instinct and intuitions. He dislikes to be asked the cause and purpose of his actions, frequently because he has no genuine reason. He is quick and sudden in his likes and dislikes. He will form the most remarkably self-sacrificing friendships with no evident reason, and on the other hand will cherish deep aversions toward those who have never harmed him. On the whole, it must be confessed that these unreasoning prejudices prove often to be warranted in facts; while the savage cannot give

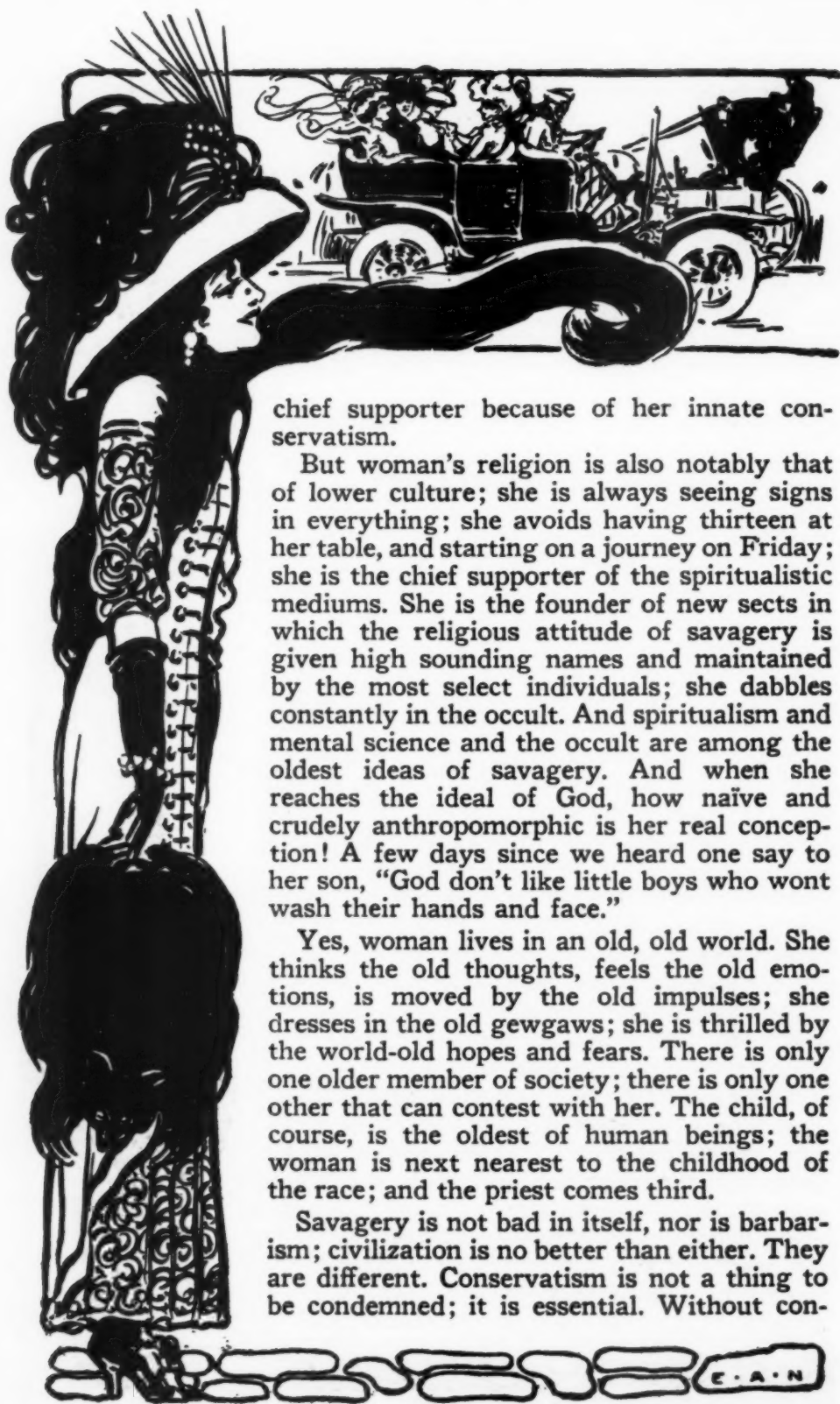


a reason, he can often afterwards say, "I told you so."

Among ourselves, woman's intuition is proverbial. Her inability to assign a reason is daily evidenced by constant answering of inquiries with the single word, "because." It is partly through this natural and immediate savage response to feeling and instinctive action upon intuition, that, on the whole, woman is quicker than man among ourselves to respond to the appeal of principle. Probably there are nine times as many women as men among ourselves, who have reached a sound conclusion regarding the problem of the Philippines. The savage is rarely politic; he does not long hold decision in the balance. He is on the whole less cautiously influenced by selfish motives than the civilized man. So, too, is civilized woman.

Religion is conservative. We have already emphasized the conservatism of the religious leader. Generally, man grows away from religion. Among ourselves the churches maintain their hold on men only by becoming social clubs or keeping the emotions highly strung. In the more scholarly sects the number of men diminishes notably. It is unnecessary to name the denomination, certainly among the most logical and scholarly, where it is laughingly claimed that "there are seven women to one man." When the hold of religion loosens upon a community, woman remains its



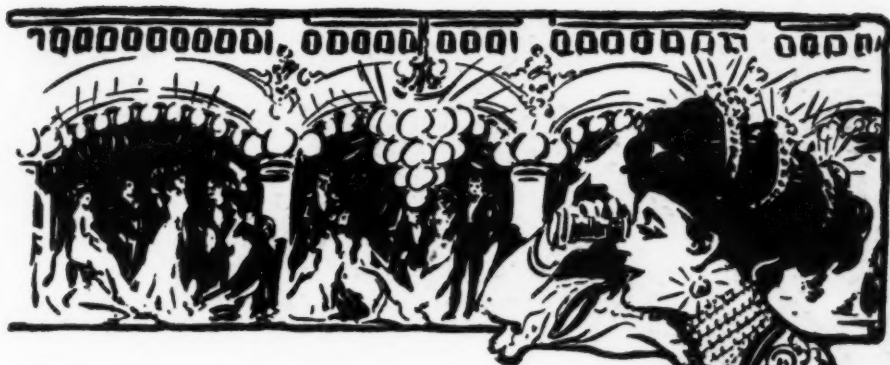


chief supporter because of her innate conservatism.

But woman's religion is also notably that of lower culture; she is always seeing signs in everything; she avoids having thirteen at her table, and starting on a journey on Friday; she is the chief supporter of the spiritualistic mediums. She is the founder of new sects in which the religious attitude of savagery is given high sounding names and maintained by the most select individuals; she dabbles constantly in the occult. And spiritualism and mental science and the occult are among the oldest ideas of savagery. And when she reaches the ideal of God, how naïve and crudely anthropomorphic is her real conception! A few days since we heard one say to her son, "God don't like little boys who wont wash their hands and face."

Yes, woman lives in an old, old world. She thinks the old thoughts, feels the old emotions, is moved by the old impulses; she dresses in the old gewgaws; she is thrilled by the world-old hopes and fears. There is only one older member of society; there is only one other that can contest with her. The child, of course, is the oldest of human beings; the woman is next nearest to the childhood of the race; and the priest comes third.

Savagery is not bad in itself, nor is barbarism; civilization is no better than either. They are different. Conservatism is not a thing to be condemned; it is essential. Without con-

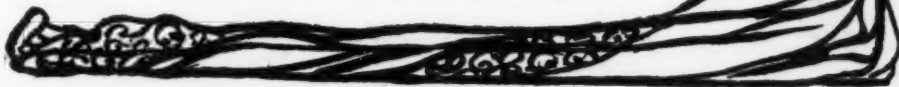


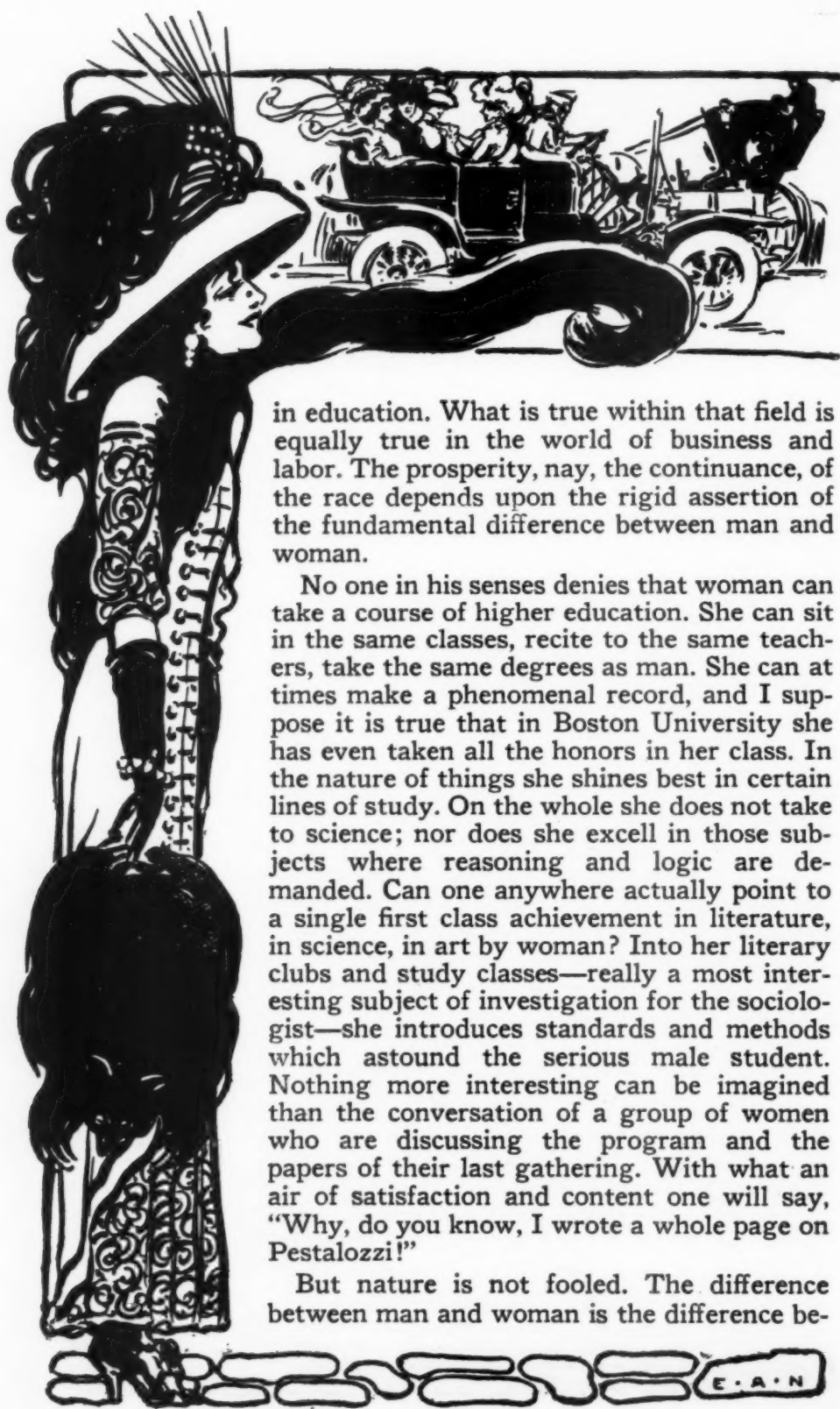
servative elements there would long since have come chaos. Woman is conservative because anabolic: the words imply each other.

The difference between the sexes begins in plant life. To overlook the profound difference between the male and female is suicide. Woman is and will be conservative as long as the race lasts. She will continue to be a better picture of the savage than man. She is neither worse nor better than man in the abstract—whatever she may be in the concrete—but she is different. She complements the man, hence, of course, she is encouraged and will be encouraged to be the savage. Man likes her trophies, her skins and her pelts, her paints and rouges, her gems and tawdry fineries. Even if she preferred the lovely shades and refined gowns of the present season, he would tire of them; and in this, not only his own taste for these savage displays shows itself, but the idea comes in of his desire, through her, to show his wealth and success in the world of active strife outside.

To come to practical questions:

We live at a moment when a great experiment is in full swing. Woman to-day demands an equal opportunity with man; she wishes to enter into open competition with him in every field of labor; she wishes to demonstrate her equalability with him to achieve great things in civilization. The conditions might be discussed in each field separately. We will consider only those in the intellectual life, the field of letters,

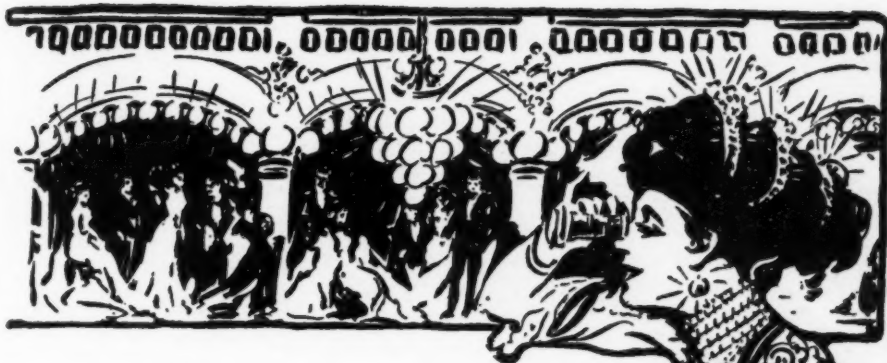




in education. What is true within that field is equally true in the world of business and labor. The prosperity, nay, the continuance, of the race depends upon the rigid assertion of the fundamental difference between man and woman.

No one in his senses denies that woman can take a course of higher education. She can sit in the same classes, recite to the same teachers, take the same degrees as man. She can at times make a phenomenal record, and I suppose it is true that in Boston University she has even taken all the honors in her class. In the nature of things she shines best in certain lines of study. On the whole she does not take to science; nor does she excell in those subjects where reasoning and logic are demanded. Can one anywhere actually point to a single first class achievement in literature, in science, in art by woman? Into her literary clubs and study classes—really a most interesting subject of investigation for the sociologist—she introduces standards and methods which astound the serious male student. Nothing more interesting can be imagined than the conversation of a group of women who are discussing the program and the papers of their last gathering. With what an air of satisfaction and content one will say, "Why, do you know, I wrote a whole page on Pestalozzi!"

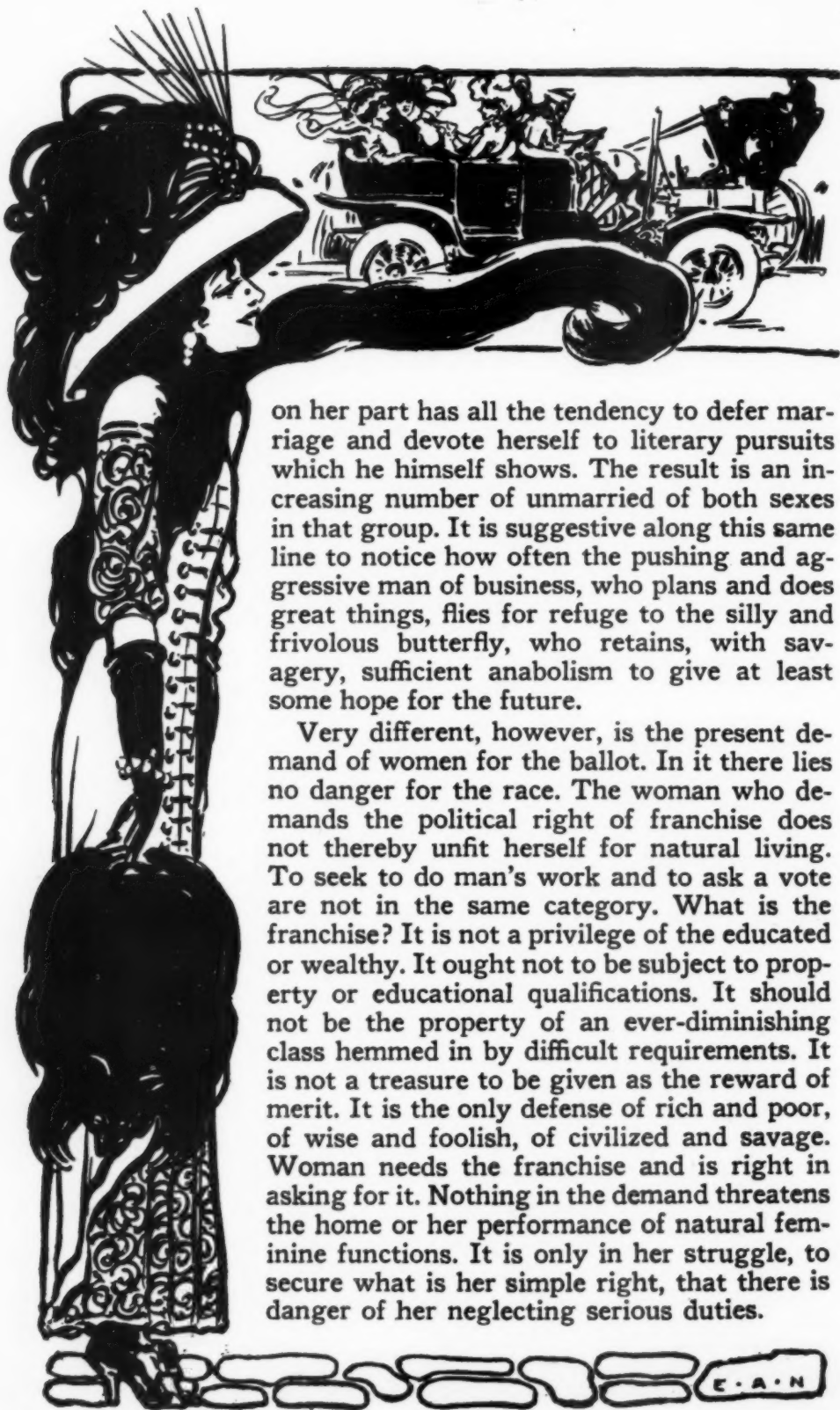
But nature is not fooled. The difference between man and woman is the difference be-



tween the ovule and the pollen grain. It is not inconceivable that a species of plants might produce pollen grains only, but should it do so, the type would die with the generation in which it gained such success. Woman may prove her ability to learn geometry and history and astronomy; she may discuss the vital questions of the day; she may devote herself to journalism and authorship; but when she does it on a large scale the intellectual group must die. It is bad enough to have bespectacled, baldheaded, male intellectuals; it can be endured by the race so long as the women are vigorous and full of feminine life and vitality, ready for homes and motherhood; but when both halves of the higher classes enter the same field, turn out the same product, demonstrate their similarity, perpetuation is impossible. Pollen grains only are a sad harvest.

It is often asserted that the male college graduate is loth to marry; he marries less certainly, and at a later age. The more he devotes himself to a truly intellectual life, the more likely this uncertainty and postponement of marriage becomes. It is also a matter of common observation that the families of intellectuals are dwindling. If such conditions have been produced in fact, presumptively a considerable part of the reason is to be found in the recent higher education of women. The intellectual man is little likely to look much outside his group for a life partner. He does not care much for the blue-stockings, and she





on her part has all the tendency to defer marriage and devote herself to literary pursuits which he himself shows. The result is an increasing number of unmarried of both sexes in that group. It is suggestive along this same line to notice how often the pushing and aggressive man of business, who plans and does great things, flies for refuge to the silly and frivolous butterfly, who retains, with savagery, sufficient anabolism to give at least some hope for the future.

Very different, however, is the present demand of women for the ballot. In it there lies no danger for the race. The woman who demands the political right of franchise does not thereby unfit herself for natural living. To seek to do man's work and to ask a vote are not in the same category. What is the franchise? It is not a privilege of the educated or wealthy. It ought not to be subject to property or educational qualifications. It should not be the property of an ever-diminishing class hemmed in by difficult requirements. It is not a treasure to be given as the reward of merit. It is the only defense of rich and poor, of wise and foolish, of civilized and savage. Woman needs the franchise and is right in asking for it. Nothing in the demand threatens the home or her performance of natural feminine functions. It is only in her struggle, to secure what is her simple right, that there is danger of her neglecting serious duties.



Jo Trapper

His Mitigated Lie

BY HUGH KENNEDY

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN W. NORTON

IF anywhere in "the forest primeval" there still linger the demons of ancient myth, the unhappy sprite bound up in cordwood fuel must have found along the line of the Lake Minnitaki Spur a congenial home. Cordwood was the *alpha* and *omega*, likewise the *iota* and *kappa*, of the spur. At a main-line camp five winters old it had its birth; at another, whose first season's cut was still green in the pile, it prematurely died.

Half-way down the spur was Five Mile Siding, where might have been the shrine of the demon. An oval of white, intagliated in a vast somber of level jack-pine and tamarack and spruce, the little clearing was piled high, as with a votive offering, with cordwood; and ringingly, with blows almost musical in the frosty

air, a big, dark bearded teamster, like an officiating flagman, was ministering to the growth of the pile.

Toddling in the trampled area surrounding the wood-sleigh, was a child. A tiny figure, moccasined, fur-capped, and mittened against the February cold, she played as if in covert rebellion against the spirit of the place. Only half-heartedly she added to her little pile of twigs and sticks.

She looked up presently.

"Daddy," she importuned, "tell me: why can't I have one?"

Scarcely pausing in his work, the father looked down on her indulgently.

"A bunny's not an easy thing to catch, lassie," he soothed.

She was not to be put off. The play

appetite, too scantily fed in the wilderness, looked hungrily from the upturned eyes.

"Elsie could go to Bunny's house, Daddy, an' *coax* him. He'd come an' eat out of my hand like my little squirlie used to. Wouldn't he, Daddy?"

The teamster leaned on the stick he had been in the act of lifting.

"No, no, lassie."

The tone of his denial was warmed with compassion for his mateless little one. "Elsie mustna' try to find Bunny. She might find old Gray Wolf instead."

A sound broke in on their talk. In slowly dwindling echoes it pulsed toward the farthest confines of the bush. It was the stop signal of an oncoming locomotive. Once a week, picking up the loaded cars and leaving empty ones, it shrieked and rumbled down the spur, the only reminder for the isolated bushmen of the forsworn, far-distant hubbub of city life.

The father seized on the welcome diversion.

"Hear that, lass? You'll see the big toot-toot in another minute, and the house that goes on wheels. Keep back from the track. There's a good lass."

The little face, wrinkling in disappointment, cleared at the promise of a new diversion.

The engine clacked over the switch-frog. Hissing, panting, half-buried in a cloud of its own vapor, it brought its train of cars to a standstill.

A brakeman descended and waved a shunting signal to the engineer.

"Only three flats for you, this trip," he growled.

The teamster made no reply. His attention was divided between his restive horses and the figure of a man descending the steps of the caboose. Big, fur coated, jaunty, self-satisfied, the stranger approached.

"I say, old timer," he boomed, a hint of patronage in his resonant and easy bass, "you don't happen—"

At a nearer glimpse of the bushman's face, he checked himself.

"Duge McCaig!" he roared. "Well, I'll be—"

In his amazement, and his haste to

grasp the teamster's hand, he neglected further to define his ultimate condition.

Duge's surprise, if less demonstrative, was equally sincere.

"Dave Leashman!" he marveled, and sprang forward to grasp the extended hand. "Why, man alive, it's twenty years since I saw you last back East!"

The engine, after a parting shove that sent the three flat cars grinding along the side-track, clanked off down the line to take water at the tank a half-mile distant. There was time for reminiscence.

Duge was in the bush as a camp teamster; his wife, Elspeth, as the camp cook. A bad season on their prairie homestead had driven them to making up thus the losses of the summer by the labors of the winter. They were no longer very young, but were content and full of hope. Chiefly they felt the lack of church and school advantages for their child.

"The little one, hey? Well, well, well! There was no little one in the old days back East, eh, Duge? Time flies, time flies. Is the wee girl coming over to shake hands with Daddy's old friend, and give him a hug and a kiss?"

The little Elsie, sheltering behind her father, received the big stranger's somewhat disconcerting advances, with the grave, shy scrutiny that precedes the giving of childish hearts.

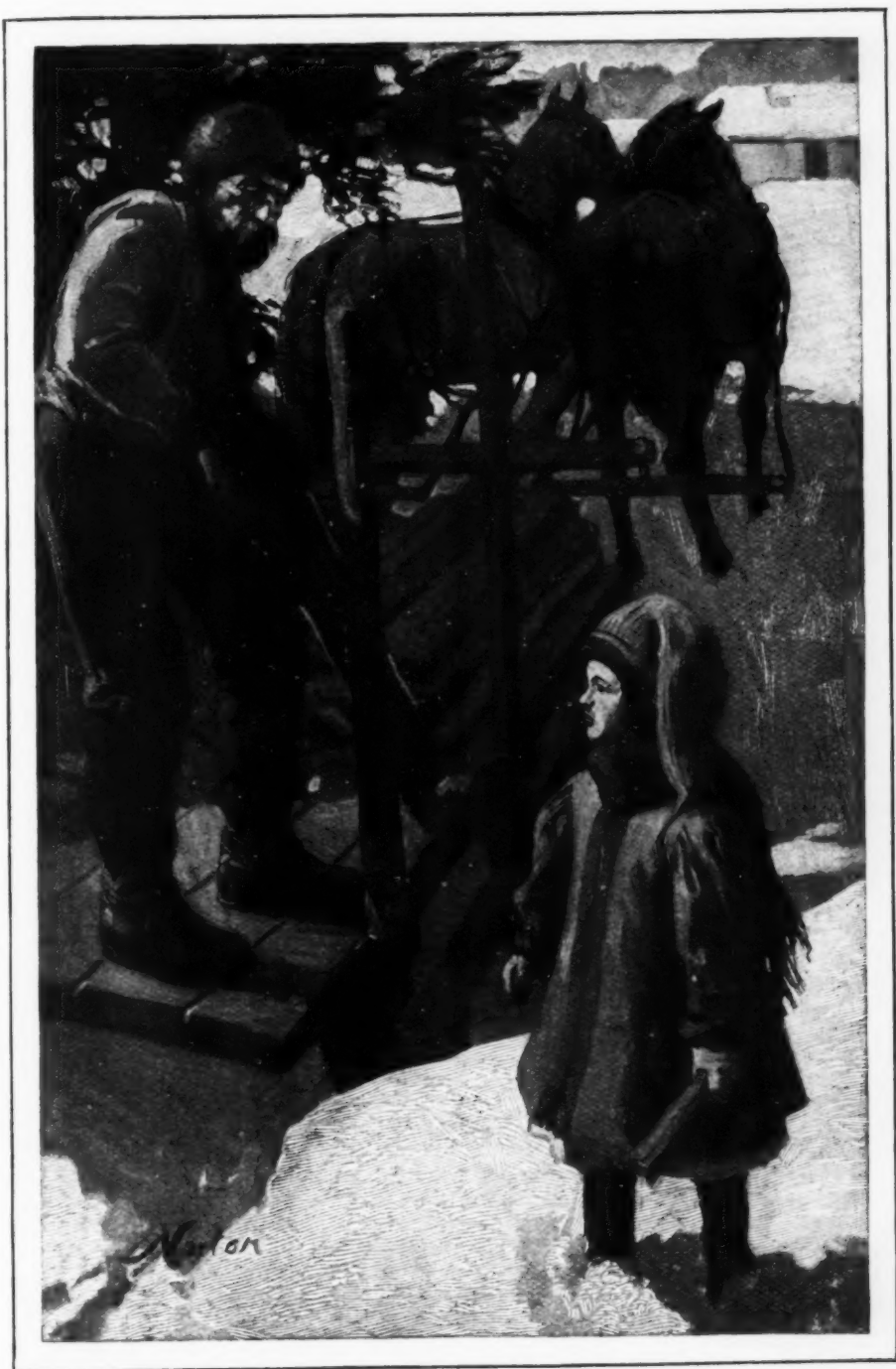
Leashman's account of himself was more dramatic than the bushman's. For ten years he had been on the staff of the provincial police. He was at present giving chase to Jo Trapper.

"What! Not the notorious Trapper?"

"The notorious Trapper, hold-up artist and outlaw, and no other."

"But wasn't he—I can't be mistaken—wasn't he safe in Sandy Hill penitentiary?"

"He was. I put the steel on him myself last May. That was after his big job, you recollect, when he held up the Transcontinental Express. He got a life sentence, but he has managed to levant. There's no end to his cunning and his nerve. A man answering his description was reported yesterday from Caspar, ten miles west on the main line. A brakeman put him off an eastbound freight. We fig-



A tiny figure, moccasined, fur-capped, and mittened

ure that he's working towards Minnitaki. His Cree wife lives there, and it's dollars to dumplings he's got a snug sum somewhere on deposit round there. He got ten thousand from the express company on that last job. Anyhow, on chances, I'm on my way to the lake."

The engine, a growing blot against the white of the right-of-way, signaled her return from the water-tank.

"It's this way," the constable hastened to conclude. "There's a thousand dollars on Trapper's head. The man that gives information'll find it worth while." He laid a fur gauntleted hand on the other's shoulder. "You're with me in this?"

With a crash and a rattle the engine coupled to her train.

The Scot was silent. It was not the silence of hesitation, but the deliberation with which he entered on every course where principle was involved.

"With you? Yes, reward or no reward. It's the plain duty of every true man."

"That's right, that's right. Glad you've promised. I'm not a religious man, like yourself, but I know when I'm dealing with one. The word of a McCaig, in the old days, was good as another man's bond."

"It's never been broken yet, thank God."

Already the train was in motion.

"Good-by, little girl," called the officer.

From the caboose steps he waved a final parting.

"See you to-morrow," he megaphoned through vaulted palms. "I'll be down on the hand-car with the trackmen."

The rumbling of the dwindling train died away to a singing that persisted long in the frosty rails.

Duge busied himself again with his load; but his thoughts were of the hunted outlaw and his crimes. Exploit after exploit—all bold, original, successful, baffling—had thrown a glamor over the man's name that even Duge, hater of all iniquity, could not but acknowledge.

The sleigh empty at last, he donned his mackinaw and took the child up beside him. Musing, he reentered the bush. Surely the outlaw must soon be captured. The snow would hold his trail for days.

He dare not sleep in the bitter cold of the open. No more dare he trust himself behind habited walls. The bush abounded with game; but the man must be without weapons—was himself a hunted thing. He must soon be starved into pulling some latch-string that would stiffen behind him to a bar of iron.

The sleigh runners purred over the bush road. The little Elsie, awed by her father's moody abstraction, was silent for a time. Suddenly, however, her little blue-mittened hands were clasped in ecstasy.

"O-o Daddy!" she shrilled delightedly. "The pretty bunny! Lo-ok! Daddy."

"Yes, yes, child"—the irritation of his broken reverie gave curtness to the father's reply—"there's no end of rabbits hereabouts. G'lang!" he urged his lagging team.

Then, softening before the trembling lip:

"There's the bunny's path. See, lassie?"

He pointed with his whipstock to the deep tracked rabbit-run.

"The path to Bunny's house, Daddy?"

"Yes, child," he answered, absently.

He drew aside to let Tim Kerrigan go by with his steaming horses and creaking, high-piled load.

The breezy Tim was on foot behind his sleigh.

"Hello, Squirrelie Girlie," he shouted; "bin out to see the Cordwood Limited?"

His merry greeting drew from the child the answering smile of established friendship.

"Daddy," she coaxed, "c'n I go back wif Tim?"

The impulsive Tim did not wait for the father's assent. He took the little bundled figure in his arms.

"Sure, ye can that, girlie mine. It's me that's needin' the foine company like yoursilf."

"Go right in to your mother," Duge threw after the child, warningly, "as soon as you get back to camp."

His last load for the day had been hauled. Behind his released team, he was trudging past the camp toward the stables when his wife's voice hailed him. It was a plainly indignant voice.



"There's the bunny's path. See, lassie?"

"Dugald McCaig," it upbraided him, with the courage of a righteous indignation, "whatever do you mean by keeping the child out to this hour? Do you want her to catch her death o' cold?"

Her husband had reached the band of light that streamed past the woman's figure framed in the doorway. She saw he was alone. The hard accents of vexation gave way to the thick, convulsive utterance of panic fear.

"Where *is* she?"

"The child?" The absorbed Duge took a moment on it. "The child? She must be with Tim," he commenced assuringly. Then a sickening doubt clutched him. "Aint she?" he burst out, helplessly.

"Aint she, aint she?" mocked the mother, in a passion of reproach. "Hear the man!" Her voice thinned to a wail: "My child! My little lamb!" The wail mounted to a shriek: "Lost! Frozen! Devoured!" Her figure straightened; her eyes blazed. With steadied voice she flung the words like a club in her husband's face: "Tim's been in camp this hour. She left him to go back to you."

A grating sob rose in the man's throat. Horror, self-denunciation, agonized prayer, the heart-wrung pang of fatherhood bereaved—all found a strangled utterance in that wordless nature-cry.

He heard no more of the woman's renewed moaning. He saw nothing of the

roused bushmen tumbling from the shanty like disturbed bees from a hive. Only the lantern in the hand of a man rushing up from the stable caught his eye. Scarcely conscious of his action, he snatched the light. Without a word he bounded up the trail toward the siding.

His moccasined feet padded steadily up the track. His lungs burned with the stinging impact of the frosty air.

He had no plan. His brain was too numb for thought. A blind impulse hurried his feet to the place where he had last seen the child.

Haste, haste, haste! That was the thing—the only thing. It might not yet be too late. The little one was closely wrapped; she might still be safe. The icicles weighting his beard, his breath congealing on his lips, the sharp report from some bursting tree top—all mocked his faint hope with their cruel evidence of the frost fiend's power. His wife's frantic wail still rang in his ears. Blighting the truth of it came home to him. First fatigue, then the frost, then the prowling lynx or fox. He sickened as he ran.

"Oh, my bairnie!" he moaned. "Why did you leave me! Why did you go to Tim? My heart was forbidding you to go. Why, why—?"

His thudding feet repeated it: "Why—why—why—why?"

In all the solemn, voiceless woods was no answer to his agony.

A snatch of her childish prattle came vividly to his mind: "Elsie would go to Bunny's house, Daddy."

He himself had sent her to her death! She had gone down one of the thousand rabbit-runs—down, possibly, the one he had so absently pointed out to her. She had gone looking for a pet, for something to fill the gap her father's cold aloofness had itself created.

His lungs were stinging, pricked by a thousand merciless needles. The taste of blood was in his throat. Yet even faster he urged his numbing limbs. The rabbit-run, the rabbit-run—once there he would be on her trail. A second gained might avert death, or—

It was here—here near the outstanding hemlock. He recognized the path among

the net-work of similar tracks. He peered at the snow, stooping keenly over his lantern. Yes, it was here, the mark of the tiny moccasin. With mute pathos, it pointed toward the lowering gloom of the thicker bush. Here she had turned aside to clear a snowbound branch. There on the snow she had fallen, showing the mark of her little length. The print of the childish hands seemed piteously outstretched for help.

Into the thickness of the wood the father plunged. His eye missed not a sign on the tell-tale snow; but the quick of his consciousness was all for the barren anguish of his heart.

He came upon a place where the wavering steps had halted. The original rabbit-track had long been lost. Back on themselves the steps had doubled, then zigzagged, then aimlessly struck off. The marks of the downfalls became more frequent; the little legs were wearying of their hopeless task. Here she had sat; again she had made off in a new direction. The yellow lantern-light ahead was broken by a spot of blue. The man dashed for it, as for a sign. It was a little woolen mit, now stiff and icy with its owner's frozen tears. Blinded, the father stumbled on.

The resting places grew more frequent. The maze of doubling tracks unwound perplexingly. The end was close.

At the next halting place the snow was strangely trampled. With low-held lantern the searcher peered. The child had circled—fallen. Was that—? Yes, a man's footprint! From the puzzling bed of trampled marks it struck off in clean, unswerving strides—*alone*. The child was saved! Some bushman had heard her cries and had carried her home. Even now, no doubt, she lay in her mother's arms.

A dozen paces down the trail Duge halted. A subtle sense was stirred within him, a sense of some alien presence. Whose was this track? What bushman wore boots—he peered again—yes, worn boots, too, instead of moccasins or shoe-packs? Why had the man taken a direction opposite to that of the child's well known home? The tracks must turn: the man had not yet got his bearings.

But they did not turn. They kept on, on into the thickest of the bush, where never an axe had yet been laid to tree. Farther on they were crossed by other tracks, similar but not so recent. Mysterious. On a rabbit-run, its neck encircled by a tight-drawn snare, a hare lay frozen stiff.

In one blighting flash Duke knew: Jo Trapper! Here the bandit had lurked through the day. To trap hares was his method of supporting life. All the revived hopes of the father died in him. The hunted man knew no degrees in crime: he who held gold at a higher price than human life was capable of any crime.

A sudden blood-lust swept every soft emotion from the heart of Duge McCaig. The striking muscles behind his great shoulders clutched convulsively. He wanted no weapon; his iron hands were enough. The built-up restraints of centuries of precept fell from him. In every tingling vein there welled the blood of fierce ancient clans that had never known sleep while yet there remained unavenged on the loathed Sassenach raider a single ravished hearth.

Close to the ground, like a bloodhound hot on the scent, Duge rushed down the outlaw's trail. It threaded, for a time, the thickest growths; towards a long-deserted trapper's cabin, then past it, undeviating. Down, finally, it dropped towards the swamp-fed stream that still ran free in defiance of the winter's frost. Along this stream, with all a practised woodman's craft, the fugitive had passed.

In this direction Duge knew he must soon reach the railroad, at the point where it trestled across the stream. There, it flashed on him, would come the end of his pursuit. He hid his lantern beneath his coat; he needed it no more on the trail and his quarry must have no warning of his approach. He recalled the water-tank by the end of the trestle, beneath which was a fire fed daily by the trackmen from Minnitaki. There, he decided, skulked his quarry.

He found himself at last, his teeth set like the jaws of a sprung trap, on the oil stained, steel bordered snow strip of the

railway. A gem-studded river of white between dark walls of spruce, the right-of-way streamed off toward Minnitaki. The never stilled sighing of the woods was frozen to its faintest whisper. Only, above the tree tops, the idle wheel of the pump windmill caught a vagrant breeze and swayed with a ghostly creaking. Blurred, obscure, like a shadowy tower projected from a castle's gloomy mass, the watertank took rounded form against the dark bulk of the woods. The pendent ice of its high-hung spout caught a gleam of light from a streamer in the northern sky. All else was dark, save where the two-paned window near the ground gave out a flickering glow from the light of a fire within.

Stealthily Duge opened the unlocked door. The light from the glowing coals of a stove met him squarely in the eyes and threw all the rest of the place into dense shadows. Crouching, ready for the spring, his right hand clutching the air as if it already felt the victim's throat, he uncovered his lantern. His eyes glared down its rays. His body went rigid. He stared long, unwinking.

On a discarded car-door, the only bed the place afforded, relaxed in sleep, a great figure huddled. The shoulders were coatless. The ropy throat was bare.

But Duge McCaig did not spring. His knees loosened; he sank to the ground. The lantern slipped from his fingers. His head fell into his circled arms. Prone on the floor, he melted into helpless sobs.

It was not the figure of the outlaw that had arrested the spring. Snuggled in the coat of the gaunt frame so evidently needed for itself, her head pillowed in the crook of an out-flung arm, one little bare hand lost in a great sinewy one, her face, tear-grimed, but ruddily peaceful, showing above the coat's lapel, little Elsie slept.

"Who's there?" demanded a voice, alarmed, threatening. More controlled, it came again. "What's the row, stranger?"

Duge braced himself. His life-long habit of stifling emotional display helped him now to a measure of steadiness.

"The little one," he faltered; "you've saved her."

"Oh, the kid?"



Her head pillowed in an out-flung arm

The man was visibly more at ease.

"She yours, partner? I heard her hollerin'. Lucky I did—got to her just in time. Don't wake the little beggar; she must be clean tuckered. She sure had a hard time of it. Scared? Lord, I don't blame her! I've got a way, though, with kids, an' she come 'round. She's a game sport, all right. How'd she get lost, old-timer?"

Unheeding the question, Duge gazed at the chubby face and stretched his hand to the other.

"Shake?" divined the outlaw. "Sure thing."

He winced at the mighty grip that closed upon his hand.

"I wasn't headin' exactly this direction, partner, but I couldn't see the kid snuff out. She had to be got to a fire—an' here we are. Look up her folks, thinks I, come morning." With less assurance, rather lamely, he reiterated: "An' here we are."

His thought had a sudden disquieting turn:

"How'd ye find me?"

"Tracked you."

Duge had himself in hand again.

"Say, friend," he added, "you must be hungry, and needing a rest. Come home with me. I've only a shanty, but what I've got is yours."

The stranger grinned. "I'm all right, partner; don't you worry about me. Say," he announced, with sudden decision, "I better be hikin'. The kid don't need me no more, an' I'm a day behind schedule now. My old woman'll be sendin' out search-parties fer me if I don't get a move on."

He waved aside Duge's staying hand and turned to the sleeping child. "Sorry, little woman," he apologized, with awkward tenderness, as the child's fretful murmur protested against disturbance, "but the old man'll have to have the coat fer himself now. She'll go to her Daddy, eh?"

The child did not awaken. Duge cuddled her beneath his coat. He strained her to his breast with all the wordless passion of his slow-moving, deep-channeled nature. In that single moment of fatherhood supremely asserted, the hard crust of over-stern precept was melted from his soul like cavern ice laid open at last to the sun's mellowing ray.

His arms half way in the sleeves of his coat, the outlaw suddenly stiffened.

"Hist!" he warned. "What's that?"

He shot his arms home into their sleeves and dropped with a listening ear to the ground.

A purring sound took gentle possession of the resonant wooden walls and murmured in the pipes that fed the tank overhead.

"Train comin'!" the stranger marveled. He sprang to his feet. "Naw; train—nit! There aint an engine on the spur. It's a handcar. Leashman!" he scoffed. "Leashman on a handcar! Huh! The idiot, to think he could get me with a game like that. He might as well be blowin' a trumpet. He's a mile away right now."

He turned fiercely to Duge. "Here, you!" he barked. "I got to make my getaway. Savve? You know me—I can see it in your eye. There's money in it for you, if ye've a mind. What're ye goin' to do—throw me down? Gimme a start. Gimme five minutes. Then ye can—" With one hand Duge pushed him toward the door. "Be off, man," he urged. "Be at my shanty in an hour—the one next to the camp yonder," he waved his free hand. "The latch'll be always on the string for you. I'll hide you somewhere. Go, now, go!"

The sound of the wheels on the frosty rails had ceased.

"H'mph!" commented the fugitive, coolly. "Stalkin' up on foot, eh? No, partner, don't you go lookin' fer no on-healthy trouble. So long as the broom wire holds out an' the rabbits is runnin' good, I'll play a lone hand till I keep a

date with my old woman. Be good to yourself—an' the kid—God bless her!"

He was off, balancing deftly on the rail, to leave no tell-tale marks on the snow. An instant he topped the grade, then his body was swallowed in the darkness of the woods beyond.

Duge McCaig clasped his treasure tightly and turned to recover his lantern from the tank chamber.

"Hands up!" boomed a voice from the shadow opposite. A fur-coated figure drew out from the trees. Three other shadowy forms stole up the track. Ahead of each was the glimmer of leveled steel. All four closed in.

"Don't shoot. It's me, Duge McCaig. You know me, Dave. Don't shoot."

The wondering four came close.

"Well—I'll—be—!"

The big officer was a huge interrogation point.

"What brings you here at this time of night?"

"The child," replied Duge quietly. "She got lost in the bush. I tracked her. The fire here saved her."

"Lucky, my boy, to get her in time. The baby I'm looking for aint so easy to track. Thought we might surprise him warming up in the tank here. Aint seen anything of him, have you, Duge?"

"Not a sign."

Faintly there came from the distant woods the sharp cracking of a bough.

"What's that?" demanded Leashman, sharply.

"Frost," said Duge, laconically. He drew his coat about the child with studied solicitude. "It's a keen night, a keen night."

Tickling the Palate of Pegasus

BY EARL DERR BIGGERS

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

IT was six o'clock of a spring evening. A steady stream of workers homeward bound hurried past the Café Cote d'Or, while, up above, the elevated growled in

constant complaint against the vast army of weary folk it must carry. Arc-lights sputtered into activity: shop girls bestowed upon their favorite newsboys the

evening penny: in the middle of the street the voices of the teamster and the motormen were raised in heated repartee. Into the picture jogged the cabs of the early seekers after the resplendent *table d'hôte*.

Inside the Cote d'Or Monsieur Casserole, the proprietor, had lighted the many lamps of welcome for the discriminating who counted his Parisian café their gastronomic shrine. Madame Casserole, ensconced once more within her little cage, was taking stock of change. In the kitchen Adolphe, master of cooks, had buckled on his apron, and the first faint odors of heavenly dishes stole out among the snowy tables.

Monsieur Casserole entered *madame's* cage, and drew from beneath her counter a bulky ledger.

"To-night," he said gravely, "it must be done."

Madame Casserole's famous smile disappeared from its accustomed place above the many chins.

"It is their time," she murmured, gazing at the clock, "always they are the first to come."

"And the last to go," added *monsieur*.

The door of the café was thrust open, and there entered two gentlemen of Monsieur Casserole's own nationality. They were unusual gentlemen, one knew that at a glance. Not for nothing did they wear the coiffure of the temperamental, the flowing black tie of the dreamer. Not for nothing, for was not the taller Perrin Trimount, who wrote that epic beginning "The fires of my youth are as cold as the snows?" And was not the other, round and small, Antoine Paquet, whose tender *vers de société* had been found most affecting by many fair ladies, when read to an accompaniment of those glances of which the author had mastered an assortment so complete?

The pair entered jauntily, arm in arm, humming a gay tune of the boulevards. Before the cage of *madame* they paused and bowed in pompous courtesy.

"We give you good-evening," remarked Antoine beamingly.

Madame Casserole lured back the smile in warm response, but the scowl of *monsieur* was one fearful to behold.

"Antoine—Perrin!" he called, as they turned away to their favorite table, "one word, I beg of you."

Affecting an air of deep surprise, they faced him.

Casserole hesitated; it was far from his wish to offend, and his severity was feigned. Tender of heart, he held for his irresponsible countrymen nothing save affection.

The pause was ominous. The slamming of the door behind entering patrons, the growl of the elevated, the rattle of cabs, none of these could distract attention from this fact. Such a silence were better broken.

"It is on a matter of business *monsieur* would consult us?" questioned Perrin, with a hurried glance at the ledger. "So be it. Most gladly will we advise. Though our knowledge of the affairs of trade is sadly deficient—is it not, Antoine? Barter, that most sordid, most—most—"

"*Oui*," aided Perrin. "To those whose thoughts dwell ever with the greater things of life—"

"If it is the greater things of life which concern you, *messieurs*," Casserole broke in, "surely your account with me is worthy consideration the most grave. Behold, each page of the ledger is filled—from cover to cover. There is no space for recording to-night's repast."

"Bah! Of ledgers there is no end!"

Antoine offered this assurance.

"The same," returned the vexed Casserole, "is not to be said of patience. No more will I be put off with the joke, the laugh. No more will I be offered quatrains with which to pay the butcher for his beef. No more will I demand the cool cash, and be offered a sonnet in jest."

The pair glanced uneasily away. Even in the face of Madame Casserole no mercy was apparent.

"From cover to cover," went on the Cote d'Or's proprietor firmly, "this book is crowded with the record of meals for which my sole return has been the pleasure of your patronage. *Sacre bleu*, it is too much. With the book my patience ends. You dine no more with me, *messieurs*, without material return."

Antoine feigned surprise.

"Return, *monsieur*!" he cried. "*Mor-*



Monsieur Casserole shrugged his shoulders

bleu! Surely you have but to seek that in our glorious work, as yet unpublished. In this café, *monsieur*, are my best couplets inspired. Here I tasted the wine that set me dreaming my 'Lines to a Goddess of Greece.' Return, *monsieur*? Is it not in the knowledge of the favor you do posterity?"

Monsieur Casserole shrugged his shoulders.

"With posterity," he said, "I am not concerned. I am concerned with Tubbs, the butcher, and Scarlett, the grocer. The one would build—what you say—a cupola—on his house, the other would educate a daughter. These things are not done on roundelays, *messieurs*."

"So be it?" remarked Perrin, haughtily. "We will take our trade elsewhere. But *monsieur* should pause to think what the biographers will say. 'Casserole!' they will say, 'such is the despised name of him who, at the outset of their brilliant careers, turned these two immortal singers hungry from his door.'"

"To me," responded Casserole, repeating the shrug, "the threat means little. I shall be many years in my grave when that is written. Also, the ledger may be found recording the many times

I allowed the immortal singers to stay."

"*Monsieur* forgets," Antoine said, "only proofs of evil interest biographers. But we will say no more. We go—Heaven knows where."

He turned a doleful face toward the street, whither he and his companion were to be thrust dinnerless. Perrin bowed his head as if the blow were more than he could bear. *Madame* turned an appealing glance toward *monsieur*.

"*Mon Dieu*," cried that gentleman, shifting uneasily in his turn, "it is not my wish to be cruel. With the greatest pain I refuse the winners of immortal-bays-to-come an *omelette* or a *filet* whereon to build a verse."

No answer from the gloomy pair before the cage.

"*Parbleu!*" Casserole cried again. "I am no miser. To-night, *messieurs*, you shall dine with me, on the best Adolphe can cook, at my expense. But — it grieves me so to speak, *mes amis*—it is the last—at my expense."

Sadly the distinguished pair bowed their thanks; with faces woefully lengthened they sought their table, where they sat for some moments in silence. It was when the waiter set before them the

glorious product of an ancient vintage that Perrin gave forth a groan which penetrated even into the kitchen of Adolphe, where it narrowly missed wrecking an *omelette* in the making.

"It is of all horrors the worst," Perrin said.

"Assuredly nothing was ever more terrible," agreed Antoine.

"Here it was—" Perrin's voice broke, "I ate the *filet* which inspired 'The Fires of My Youth.'"

"It was *salsifis*—shall I ever forget—which set me singing of Nanette. And in stanzas destined to live, as these fools of editors shall some day be taught."

A waiter bent above them with some commonplace on the weather, but Perrin brushed him mournfully aside.

"They write," he said, "of flashing eyes and hair of gold that set the poet's lute to strumming. Bah! Of *escargots* and *omelettes*, of Chartreuse and salads—of these things should they write. For without them, poetry must die."

Antoine gloomily regarded his glass.

"With us," he repeated brokenly, "poetry dies to-night. We who have seen the heights of Parnassus must turn back. And to what?"

"I have heard of places such as those toward which we drift, Antoine. One eats sitting on a stool, like the school dunce. Under glass globes are the soiled sandwiches preserved—as in a museum."

"And inspiration? Inspiration for sonnet and triolet? Is it to be found there, Perrin?"

Perrin's head wagged slowly.

"Nothing is to be found there," he said, "save indigestion."

The Café Cote d'Or was now merry with the laughter of those who had found the solace of the *table d'hôte*. Glasses tinkled, waiters sped on the wings of love of a tip, Monsieur Casse-rolle circulated happily among his guests. At one table only, sadness lingered.

Antoine set down his glass and spoke loudly.

"It is carried too far," he cried. "It is an outrage to sensitive souls unbearable. Let us—"

"Enough," Perrin admonished. "Our sorrow is our own." He leaned across the

table. "For some time," he whispered, "I have noticed that the gentleman at the table behind you—he of the impressive waistcoat and crimson face—listens to our talk. Let us say no more."

Antoine accepted the suggestion, and silence again fell at the table of genius. But the gentleman of the crimson face had not listened in vain. He turned to his companion, a handsome young man in his early twenties.

"Jimmy," he said, exultingly; "I've got an idea, and it's a lulu."

The young man flicked the ash from his cigaret.

"I presume that, as usual, it concerns Elysium Oats," he said languidly. "With you, ideas and oats appear inseparable."

"You are right," continued the elder man, severely; "the idea does concern Elysium Oats. And I might add that if more of your own ideas were turned in that direction, your advancement in the company might progress at a rate of speed in keeping with the clothes you wear. But that is neither here nor there. Have you noticed the pair at the next table—the vaudeville sketch-team in the East Aurora neckwear?"

"Not particularly."

"You've missed it. They're poets, and broke. A common combination maybe. Now it's always been my idea that the inspiration for a rattling good poem—say like 'Hiawatha' or—'When the Frost is on the Pumpkin'—was usually supplied by an airy fairy Lillian in a Gainsborough hat."

"So history teaches."

"Well, history's lying—that is, if the tale handed out by these amateur Tennysons is O. K. According to them, Jimmy, there's more inspiration in boarding-house hash than in a young ladies' seminary. Give 'em a meal and they give you a sonnet. A meal-ticket gets better results than a seat in the front row near the chorus."

"So far so good. And now, my dear uncle, the idea?"

"Simple enough. I'm going to feed them Elysium Oats."

"Expecting them to turn out a second Maud Muller on a summer's day, raking the meadow sweet with hay."



"Monsieur, have a care!" screamed Perrin

"Talk sense. Can't you see the point? I feed 'em Elysium Oats. Maybe other things are on the bill, but the oats are featured. Inspired by the best breakfast-food on the market, they sit down and dash off immortal verse in praise of it. Me running ads in the papers. 'Great poets agree,' I say in the ads, 'that the only real, red-hot inspiration for a struggling poet is a good meal. Read what Lucius J. Somebody, the eminent poet, wrote after one dish of Elysium Oats.' Here, Jimmy, I follow with a hummer of a poem. 'To-morrow,' I say at the bottom, 'be on the lookout for a poem by Junius H. Singer, also inspired by our Oats. Just add cream and sugar and serve.'"

"A brilliant scheme, my dear uncle," laughed the young man, "but you will never carry it through. A poet has a soul. What you suggest would sear and mutilate it."

"Nonsense. A poet has a palate. What I suggest will tickle it. Will you come

with me while I arrange matters with the Poets' Union?"

"No thanks." The young man yawned. "I'll wait here, if you don't mind."

The elderly man crossed to the table where Antoine and Perrin were consuming, in gloomy silence, the divine dishes of Adolphe. He bowed politely and drew up a chair.

"Pardon my intrusion, gentlemen," he remarked. "I'm a plain man, and I don't dally with the dictionary when I talk. I've got a proposition to put to you. My name is Henry J. Stumps, and I am manager of the Elysium Oats Company, Limited. You have eaten Elysium Oats?"

He paused for an answer. Both poets regarded him solemnly. Neither spoke.

"Ah—I perceive you have not. That is not your fault, but your misfortune. I won't take the time to apologize for overhearing part of your recent conversation—I just want to know this: Does a fancy dish really set the—er—the poet's flute—er—lute to humming?"

"Ah, *monsieur*, if you but knew," Antoine burst out. "The wonderful dishes cooked by Adolphe—how they fill the artistic soul with joy—with bliss—"

"All right," interrupted the head of the Elysium Oats Company. "All right. That's all I want to know. Now here's the proposition: I pay for the inspiration, you furnish the poetry. I take you by the hand and introduce you to the sort of dinner that lives in history. In return, you train your guns on Elysium Oats and grind out some epics that'll make all other breakfast-foods forgotten."

For a moment the scheme did not penetrate the artist minds, but when it did, Perrin Trimount—he who had lyrically confessed that the fires of his youth were as cold as the snows—rose to his feet in a blaze of indignation."

"*Monsieur*," he shrieked, "it is an insult! To our calling it is an insult! For this you shall pay!"

Mr. Stumps reached into an inner pocket.

"Naturally," he responded. "I pay for everything. I'm a liberal man."

Perrin fell back into his chair.

"*Malpeste!*" he cried. "You do not even talk our language."

"I usually let my money do the talking," replied Mr. Stumps, "and I never noticed that it had any difficulty making itself understood. Now listen. I'll give you a dinner that will be one dazzling dream from soup to *au revoir*. There'll be inspiration to throw away. Laboring under the influence of this meal you sit down and do me a poem each in praise of Elysium Oats, the best breakfast-food on the American market to-day. I'll run your anthems in the papers and say the Oats inspired them—oh, the Oats'll be on the menu, too—I'm no believer in advertising fakes. For your interest in the cause, besides paying the cost of the dinner, I hand you each—"

"*Monsieur*, have a care!" screamed Perrin, angrily.

"*Parbleu!* What an outrage," cried Antoine.

"Fifty dollars in cash. What's more, there's fifty each in it for all the rising young poets of your acquaintance you care to ring in on the feed."

Antoine thoughtfully regarded his coffee. He did not speak. Perrin also was silent. Mr. Stumps watched a waiter hurry by with a very red lobster.

"I'm after a high grade of work," he went on, a moment later. "I want poems the children'll learn to recite and the old folks'll enjoy. I want poems that'll haunt people long after they've laid down the paper or passed the bill-board; poems that will follow them round and make them miserable until they've tried the Oats. I'm out for the big stuff, and ready to pay for it. What's the answer?"

There seemed to be no answer. Neither of the poets spoke. When Monsieur Caserole paused at their table with the gracious hope that the fare was of the usual excellence, they did not seem to hear. Their dreamy eyes were fixed on space.

"What's the answer?" the Oats man asked again.

Perrin pulled himself together.

"*Monsieur*," he said with dignity, "you do not understand. We cannot accept. Antoine and I—together we fight toward the ideal. Antoine and I—"

Antoine raised a commanding hand.

"One moment," he broke in. "What was the sum *monsieur* offered?"

"Fifty dollars each," returned Mr. Stumps quickly. "Fifty round, cold, clammy dollars. Take my advice, gentlemen. Bury the ideals. Ideals never got a man a meal yet. Bury them, and don't waste good time doing a 'Heart Bowed Down' specialty over their grave, either. If you must be poets, join the balance in the bank division; come in among the velvet carpets and the drop-lights."

Another silence fell. A lady Antoine Paquet had once celebrated in song smiled at him across the Cote d'Or, but he looked at her with unseeing eyes. His lips moved.

"Fifty dollars," he murmured.

"Antoine!" cried Perrin, in horrified warning.

"There is, then," continued Antoine, "so much money in the world?"

"Think what it is—to prostitute one's Art," Perrin said.

"Think what it is—to dine," responded Antoine.

His eyes, wandering across the café to *Madame's* cage, fell upon a huge ledger at her elbow, which she had forgotten to return to its place beneath her desk.

"*Monsieur*," said Antoine firmly, "I dedicate my Muse to your infernal Oats."

"Good!" said Henry J. Stumps.

He looked at Perrin.

"And you?" he asked.

"We share all," returned Perrin brokenly, "shame, as well as glory."

Mr. Stumps rose briskly.

"All settled," he said. "Meet me here to-morrow evening at seven with all the eating poets you can corral. I want to rush this through. Remember—at seven."

He hurried back to his nephew.

"It's a go," he cried delightedly. "I got 'em. They was a little touchy at first, but I guess I can handle their kind."

As they passed out, Mr. Stumps turned and waved a farewell to his subsidized poets.

"*Adiós*," he cried.

"*Adieu—adieu*," prompted his nephew. "'*Adiós*' is Spanish."

"Thunder! I thought it was French," said Henry J. Stumps.

Out under the elevated he raised his eyes to the great structure as if he sought the stars beyond.

"The scheme of a Napoleon," he exulted. "The master stroke of the age. Tickling the palate of Pegasus. I'll publish poems about Elysium Oats that'll live in literature. I'll run all other breakfast-foods off the market."

In the Café Cote d'Or Perrin Trimount mourned fitfully the crash of his high ideals.

"Outrage!" he muttered. "Insult!"

Antoine Paquet made no reply. Only with the handle of his fork he traced and retraced an unseen word on the cloth. And the word that he traced was "fifty."

Again it was six o'clock, the dining hour. Monsieur Casserole had lighted the lamps of welcome, *madame* had settled herself in her cage, Adolphe had buckled on his apron. The Cote d'Or glowed warmly, luringly, in gay suggestion to the seeker after the resplendent *table d'hôte*.

To the café of the divine dishes of Parisian label came Perrin Trimount, author of "The Fires of My Youth." Came also Antoine Paquet, he of the tender verses and the no less tender glances. And with these two gentlemen of genius, hot on the trail of a fabled dinner, came their friend Swinburne Smith, the magazine laureate, Paden Burnette, who did comic-opera lyrics; Billy Heath, who filled newspaper columns with verse and worse, together with Rodin and Carter, also reputed to be wooers of the Muse.

Henry J. Stumps, puffing in at a quarter past seven, found them anxiously waiting near *madame's* cage. With graceful persiflage Antoine introduced him round. He shook hands with the enthusiasm of a man pumping water from a sinking ship.

"Well, well. Glad to know everybody," he sputtered. "All on hand with the Muse in tow, I presume."

He led them down aisles bordered by snowy tables to a big banquet board heaped with flowers. With an airy wave of his hand, he seated them.

It was characteristic of Mr. Stump's frank and open way of doing business that when each of the seven opened his napkin, he found fifty dollars in crisp bills inside.

"Don't mention it—don't mention it," requested the Oats man airily. "For the time being we'll forget the compact. We'll forget that down-town in the offices of Elysium Oats there's a type-writer waiting for each of you." It was a delicate matter to introduce, but Mr. Stumps felt that he had managed adroitly. "We'll eat, drink, and do the merry-merry, as the poet says. We'll corner the inspiration market so that when we come to tackle the subject of Elysium Oats, the result will make Shakespeare turn over in his grave in envy."

Proud of his classical allusion, Mr. Stumps sat down, and after a perfunctory cheer, the assembled poets applied themselves to the business in hand with smiling faces. As course followed course, they inclined toward revelry. It was the introduction of a dish said to be Ely-



ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN - OS -

"Well, well. Glad to know everybody."

sium Oats, however, that inspired the gale of laughter which carried the dinner onward into a riotous success.

At 10:30 Mr. Stump rose and gently suggested it was time they found out what the Muse had to offer.

"*Oui*," cried Perrin, who, despite fallen ideals, seemed the gayest there, "*oui, monsieur*. But first, *messieurs*, I had a friend—"

He whirled away into an anecdote. They followed uproariously. The popping of many corks punctured his story.

At half-past eleven Mr. Stumps rose in his dignity and, gently but firmly overruling all interruptions, led the class in gastronomically inspired poetry to a couple of waiting cabs.

A brisk rain was falling, and as the revelers stepped from the Cote d'Or a chill wind struck them full in the face. On the instant all gayety died. They took their seats in sullen silence, much as members of the chain-gang on a rocky stretch of road. Mr. Stumps, taking it as the natural reaction after the jollity incidental to the cornering of the inspiration market, respected their silence, and sat in a little flutter of excitement waiting for some early blooming Homer in the delegation with which he rode to spout in the darkness a deathless stanza on the virtues of Elysium Oats.

No early blooming Homer developed. The flash of a light under which they passed revealed the party of poets drooping in their seats like wilted flowers. The cabs jogged on through the narrow *cañons* of the business district, the echo of the horses' hoofs now the only sound where all day had rattled the city's traffic.

Into a great building, dark and gaunt, Mr. Stumps admitted them, and up a Stygian flight of stairs he led the way to an elusive door. Once inside he switched on the lights, and revealed what resembled a newspaper office deserted by its denizens. Some ten typewriters stood, neatly arranged for use, a white sheet of paper in the carriage of each. They awaited only the touch of genius.

The seven who were there to inscribe the anthems of Elysium Oats sat down,

each before a machine, and regarded the blank paper in dismay.

Mr. Stumps lighted a cigar.

"Hope the Muse doesn't mind the smoke," he said jokingly, "Take your time, gentlemen. I want poems that'll get a word from the book-reviewers. Go slow, but sure."

He blew rings toward the dingy ceiling. No sound of a typewriter in action broke the stillness.

"That's right," Stumps advised, "think it over. And say, if you can, ring it in that Elysium Oats is the best food for the invalid."

Again silence, then a gust of wind and rain at the window, charitably disturbed it. Mr. Stumps' nerves began to recognize that he was playing the only speaking part. He shifted his chair; it creaked noisily.

"It might start you off," he ventured, "if I was to tell you we've won three gold medals for purity."

Still the seven drooped in disdain of conversation before seven sheets of blank paper. Somewhere off in the distance a belated car dragged by on its way to the barns. Mr. Stumps bit off a large portion of his cigar.

"See here," he cried, "how long does it take to get going in your business?"

Antoine yawned sleepily, and broke the long continued silence of the poets' union.

"Sometimes," he said, "the first light of the morning streams through my windows before I so much as dip my pen—"

"Not for mine," cried Mr. Stumps, leaping to his feet. "I'm going home. I never was much for late hours. Show your poems to the night-watchman when you get through, and if he likes them, he'll let you out. Good-night."

Mr. Stumps did not sleep well that night; 6:30 o'clock the next morning found him opening the door of the room in the offices of Elysium Oats, where he had left seven poets in the throes of composition. At the first glance inside, he started back with a cry of amazement. A horrible and unexpected sight had met his gaze.

The first rays of a belated sun, creep-

ing in through windows the janitor never washed, fell warmly on seven poets sleeping the sleep of the weary. Expressions of beatific calm crowned their faces. Seven pairs of arms were twined in loving caress around seven typewriters.

As Mr. Stumps leaped forward in angry protest against what looked like a disregard of his compact, he beheld that which cooled his anger. Something had been written on the paper that had last night been blank.

"Oats that in far off, sun-kissed fields,
Were tossed by winds from Elysium—"

Mr. Stumps read on the nearest. Hurriedly he scanned the products of six other machines. There also he found verses extolling his beloved oats. The contract had been honored, and this sleep of the poets was one of natural exhaustion following a duty well performed.

"Wake up!" cried Mr. Stumps, snatching the manuscript from the typewriters. "Wake up, gentlemen, it is morning. Wake up and accept my thanks for these poems. I tell you, Elysium Oats is going down in literature, as I predicted."

Starting guiltily, the seven awoke and blinked at the busy Mr. Stumps like owls caught out by day. To his warm praises of the verses, if they replied at all, it was in unintelligible monosyllables. He bowed them out, still overflowing with congratulations over the product of the wee, small hours.

Then Mr. Stumps went wildly in search of his nephew.

"You sneered at my scheme," he said. "You claimed it wouldn't work. Look at the result."

"You like the poems?" inquired the young man.

"They're just what I wanted."

The other yawned elaborately.

"That's good," he remarked carelessly.

"I'm glad they suit. I wrote them."

"What!" screamed the excited Mr. Stumps.

"I wrote them. I used to do that sort of thing—verses and stuff—on the college-papers."

"But—but—"

"I found your class in poetry asleep at

the switch when I came in this morning. You must have overdone the inspiration."

Mr. Stumps put his hand to his head.

"I aint been mixed up very often since I went out to chase the gay old dollar," he remarked, "but—but I guess I'll run down and have a cup of coffee. Before I go, though, I want to say I guess your probation is ended. You go over into the advertising end Monday morning."

He sighed heavily.

"What breaks me up," he added, "is that this bunch of four-flushers walked away into the great unknown with three hundred and fifty of my good money."

"Guess again," responded Jimmy.

He took a roll of bills from his pocket.

"I did a little painless extracting while they slept. Take it before I break down at the unusual sight of so much money."

The elder Stumps wrung his hand with renewed warmth.

"Jimmy, you're a jewel. All this will come back to you by way of salary. You young duffer, why didn't you tell me you was a poet?"

"I'm not," protested Jimmy; "that's the pleasant part of it—I'm not. Or if I am, then the tickling-the-palate-of-Pegasus gag goes up in smoke. This being Saturday morning, and the last painful period before the drawing of my weekly stipend of nine dollars, I wrote those things on a breakfast consisting of a piece of squash pie and a glass of milk."

One final picture of the Café Cote d'Or at six o'clock, the hour for dining. The door is thrust open, and there enter two gentlemen of Monsieur Casserole's own nationality. One may note they wear the coiffure of the temperamental, the flowing black tie of the dreamer. They advance, and stand before the cage of *Madame*. One of them—Antoine Paquet—carries a huge package, which he lays upon the counter. They both bow in pompous courtesy.

"With the compliments of both of us," says Antoine. "It is a new ledger, *Monsieur*. The largest to be found."

Monsieur Casserole weighs it gloomily in his hand.

"*Mon Dieu*," he sighs, "it is yet too small—too small."



Struggling under the most precious bulk in the world

Cast Away

BY LEO CRANE

Author of "Two Shots at Carsons," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL CRAWFORD

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

—*Cor. ix:27.*

OUT of the wan mists struggled the sun, to smile over a sea of fang-like waves. These churned in to break upon a beach, foam-flecked and yellow as gold. Sometimes the combers worried a cask, a shattered spar, in testimony of the recent storm, mute bits of evidence which settled down on the sands as if worn out. Now, tossed from crest to crest, came a white something. It smashed to the beach like a worried missile, spent from useless flight. It was a dingy white jacketed life-preserver, bruised, water-soaked; on its covering were stenciled the words:

S. S. STAMBOUL, NEW YORK.

Farther up on the beach, huddled together, were two black objects, and when the sun had climbed high one of these moved, lifted, and groaned. It was a man, or the wreck of one.

"Rouse oudt, all handts!" he called

huskily, after prods and shakes had failed to bring an answer from the other.

The second man came to, a terrorized awakening, scrambling up.

"I t'ought that would lift you on deck."

"Hello, Dutchy! you aint dead!" came the tired greeting.

"Nod much; don'tt you remember comin' t'rough that surf?"

"An' crawlin', fightin', out of the teeth of it? I do now."

"Well! so we're landted. Lots of stuff has come ashore besides us, and maybe the oldt *Stamboul* is groundted somewheres. We must look oudt for grub und stuff to keep us alive."

"We ought to rig up a signal, too."

"Plendty of time for that, aindt it?"

"Well, we may be out of the course, but then the *Stamboul* wasn't the only craft driven out, an' they didn't all go down, certain."

"Und we will fly, whad?" asked the husky one.

"A shirt'll do when we get a staff up. Anyway, we can pile some driftwood for

a fire. It'll dry out when the sun gets healthy again, an' with that we can always send up smoke."

"Firsdt to get some foodt," argued the German. "Then we can rig a signal all righdt. T'ought this was a reef, but I guess it's some size to it, like an island, maybe. I'm nody anxious to spendt my oldt age on such a place mit you, Mac, so hustle 'boutd und see what we can findt."

"The idear, my friend, is almost alike in both cases," replied the tall fellow.

They went different ways on the beach. All day was spent in collecting fragments, anything that might be of use, down to the last piece of burnable wood. Meantime they satisfied hunger with a sort of squid eaten raw. By night they had secured a case of tinned food and some badly soaked biscuit, beside a collection of odd wreckage. Of this last not a bit was edible, but Goetz, the German, said it would come handy. His saving spirit was to thank for many a useful bit of stuff in later days. Mac was of the temperament to regard enough as good as a feast, and he was sure that they would find fruit inland. A supply of food was his only thought—enough to last until they were picked up.

Fruit they did find at no great distance, and three days later, when the sea was very calm—as if satisfied with its destructive effort—they sighted the battered hulk of the old *Stamboul*, a wrecked picture, aground at a far distant point of the beach on the other side of a headland. Then followed several more days of wearing labor. They transferred to shore everything that the waves had not washed from the vessel, and their immediate needs were amply filled. They had secured a supply of matches even. Finally there came a chance to rest. This was after they had built a shelter for themselves and arranged a depot for the supplies, covering these with planks and canvas. They had raised a signal of distress, a tattered Union Jack that Mac had discovered in the cabin, and their woodpile on the headland was ready for lighting. They lacked nothing save a ship.

"Now we must be patient," said Goetz.

"Sure we will; but it's goin' to be a

tiresome amusement," replied Mac, who was a nervously active man.

"Any, we've got a pipe und cardts—"

"Well, we could be worse off, Dutchy; there might be only one of us."

The long days began to pass without event. They took turns watching the sea, but this was enough to drive one mad, so they agreed to spend most of the time together on the little headland, a rocky rise, where they told yarns to while away the hours, and played at cards, and smoked, and planned for the future.

"Never again for me when I get back to the sight of gardens," Mac would say, groaning at the thought of his situation.

"Not me, either, but I've saidt that before; I remember when I signdt on the *Corsican*, which was in—let me see, Mac, that musdt have been in '83, und—"

So Goetz would drift off into a tale of his adventures.

"Well," Mac would comment at his conclusion, "that was tough, all right; but, by the Pilot, this is worse. Still, we oughtn't kick, 'cause we might be sharin' the briny bunks wit' the rest of the outfit. Who'd have thought that all them boys would be where they are, when we left Shanghai. Not a man of 'em feared the sea a mite, but the sea'll do for us all if we give it time. I've got the fear of it in me now. That last night turned the trick. Where did all that water come from, Dutchy? Like a tidal wave it was, gettin' bigger and bigger. An' this is what comes to me for gamblin' my last cent in Baltimore, an' goin' out in a cattle-ship to Liverpool. Sure! that's how I started. Then off to Australia, to Manila, an' to Gawd knows where an' back again.

"Yer see, I was in Baltimore, an' near stranded. There was a job waitin' for me in New York, if I got there by three days' time. Well, me wit' only money enough to see Philadelphia, it was a case of bumpin' the brake the rest of it, an' Dutchy, I was tired of that travel. I thought my luck was wit' me, so I gambles the money to double it. It wouldn't double. I was broke; so I goes out to Liverpool pokin' cattle. Since then, why I've been 'round the world in circles and shifts, tryin' to make New York. Guess I'll get there some day. Well!"

Two weeks passed. The sun broiled the sands by day and the softly burning stars lighted them by night. It was an indolent life, now that they were secure from famine, and they loafed and slept. Finally they were driven to seek work of some kind to keep from rotting into old age, as Mac put it.

Goetz suggested further exploration. He said he was curious to know what might be on the other side of the island.

"Certain, we can't stay here, forever," agreed Mac. "I'll welcome anything yeh find, even if it's a fight wit' niggers. Lead on."

They prepared some provisions and started. Their only weapons were knives, of which in the wreck they had found a number. Two of these they lashed to staves, making crude spears. The expedition in search of change started.

They followed the beach, for they feared to leave the sea, much as they dreaded its wrath. The sight of a sail would be worth more than the time spent in short cuts across the island, and a sail was their hourly hope. It was tough work they had cut out for themselves, but they had been used to accepting the world as they found it.

Goetz was of phlegmatic German stock, and he grumbled a good deal, while the other had the cheery if hasty disposition of the Celt. Both rovers of the world, they were not particularly interesting to one another, though a man of different mould would have found in either a source of much entertainment. Their lives had been, save for the difference in temperament, cast along similar highways; though Goetz had been the sort of cautious spirit that plans and hesitates, and Mac had entered into his ventures

with an abandon and recklessness that promised failure more than it assured success.

Each of them, however, though they had tossed as derelicts about the world, deluded himself with plans. These were somewhat dormant at present, but given a sail and with a feverish haste they would begin anew the framing of equally hazardous ventures to reap the one thing necessary to their imagined happiness, a thing which neither of them had ever enjoyed. That one thing necessary they had followed over and across the world, along new trails and old, skirting the slippery edge of danger. They had dared everything in its seeking, even dishonor.



A stream of gold issued from the panel

Always had it lured them with the promise, and when fortune frowned on their schemes they were not cast down. With each rebuff, they had recovered but to make a fresh and more determined start in pursuit.

But always was the one thing necessary before them, a glittering, elusive thing, indeed; and always were they just near enough to it to chance another cast of the dice. Mac had joined more than one desperate crew of adventurers that he might redeem his hopes from an absolute despair; Goetz would not have related all his wanderings because of the tricky paths he had pursued. It had eluded them until now, this one thing necessary, that for which they had gambled their days of lustiness and friendships, their virtues and their prides.

Other men had sought gold along quieter ways, though perhaps by as stealthy and as mean methods; these two had gone after it with their arms bared and their eyes greedy for the crude thing itself. Gold! They had fought the world for it, and the seas that span the world. They had braved every danger of the zones, hoping with each new start they might find the rainbow's end; and they had come to this islet, off the track of ships. They were broken, helpless, lost even. The world and the treasures of it went spinning on without them, ruthlessly uncaring. They must seek the first to pursue the other. At present they were banished from the struggle, doomed to idleness and thought.

They could not endure the pleasures of idleness. For the first time in many adventurous years, neither of them faced a nervous struggle for existence, nor cherished any illusions concerning gain. As wild spirits imprisoned after a debauch, they sickened to be free. But to be released they must sight a sail, and the sea stretched away out of their sight, a vast waste, wide, filled with a maddening loneliness. Dawn came and the sun, the day gleamed its golden atmosphere, the night brought the stars to burn softly; and this was their life, a calendar of periods without a history. They lived; they no longer fought—there was nothing to fight for.

Skirting the coast and watching the sun, they came to the belief that their prison was a comparatively small place in area. On the second day, when they had reached what they thought was the opposite side of the island, they came to an inlet protected by a reef. A thick grove of cocoanut palms shielded most of the lagoon from their sight, and not until they had penetrated this wooded place did they perceive anything to arouse them from lethargy. Mac was the one to cry out. He pointed ahead. Goetz stared and uttered a blasphemous expression of surprise. They had found a ship.

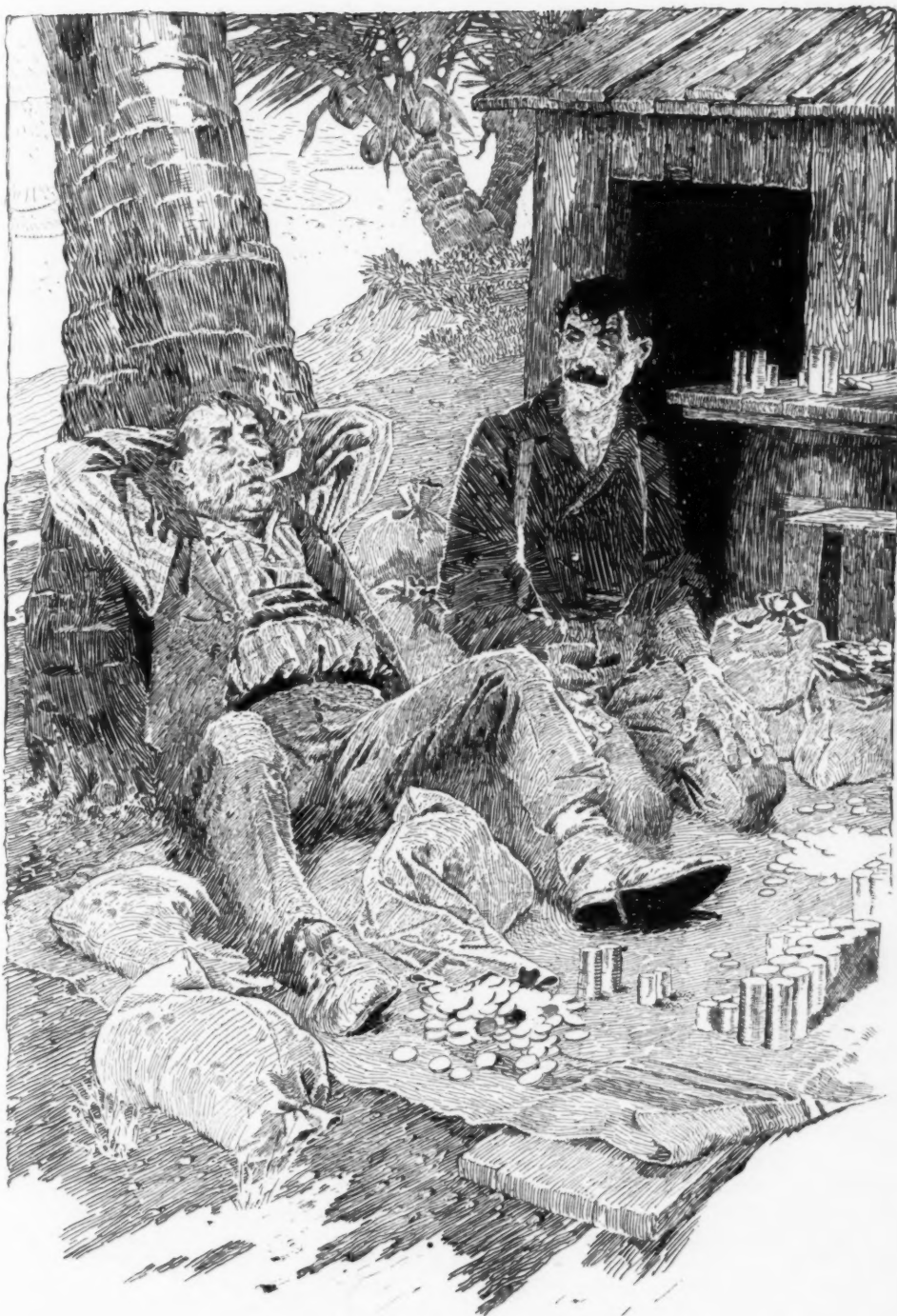
Open mouthed, almost unbelieving, the two men stood still and marveled at this sight. They made no outcry of extreme pleasure or thanksgiving, since such a vessel could be of but little use. It was old, rotting, the masts gone, and the hull crumbling; moreover, this strange wreck lay high up in the grove of palms, back from the beaches, like a whale grounded. The sea had abandoned it after making it a ball for tossing. It was cast aside, like themselves, a thing forgotten. Careened, it lay a huge carcass that had not moved since the death-stroke, the decks aslant, the vines growing over them. Blackened stumps were the mast butts, crushed as shells were the bulwarks, bulging were the decks.

Mac climbed cautiously up until he reached the doors leading into the cabin. He kicked these open and peered into the dark.

"Nothin' doin' in the line of a crew," he called back. "Come along! but be leery of them planks—they're rotten to the touch."

Goetz followed him as carefully, and together they crept down into what had been a splendidly built saloon. Mold and weather had long since destroyed the more fragile of the interior fittings. A quantity of broken glass lay on the floor and a battered ship's lamp still swung over the center-table. Nothing of value was to be seen.

Greedy for anything of worth, they began a search. It was an easy matter to get at the lockers, for at a blow fell the doors and the molding remnants of stuffs



Sitting in the shade they stacked the coin in little piles

behind. Wearied at length of a hunt that yielded nothing, they turned to climb out into the sunlight again. It was Goetz who slipped and fell with the wreck of the companion-ladder. The crumbling wood had given way beneath his clumsy feet and he came down heavily.

"Careful comes as careful goes," said Mac, laughing at the other's discomfiture.

Suddenly he paused, a shrewd expression on his face, which at times exhibited a tricky nature, suspicious and speculative.

"Look, Dutchy! See the little door we didn't pipe off till you brought down the Jacob's ladder. Stand aside a bit, an' I'll see what's inside o' this."

He directed to the panel a sturdy kick, and the wood crunched away from his heel. The two men leapt back from the place where they stood, startled by an unusual sound. For the moment they were still, quite frightened out of their unfearful calm, and they became pictures of doubt and hesitation. Then with bated cries of delight they sprang forward again, each catching up a handful of coins. Gold! Gold! A sail could not have brought to them finer joy.

With the splintering of the door, a perfect stream of gold, like a glinting waterfall, had issued from the broken panel to stream down into the slime of the cabin floor. Out of the dirt they caught up the precious disks, clutching them, holding them tight in greedy hands. They had found at last the one thing necessary. The sea had been kind. Aside from the haunts of men, forgotten, unsought, the treasure had awaited them. This isle marked the rainbow's end.

Mac, crooning to himself in phrases of an avaricious glee, childishly, were it not for the tip of a cunning leer, shuffled the coins in his hands, and was quite unmindful of the other man. Goetz squatted down on the cabin floor, his gold gripped hard in his fingers, while he regarded the rest of it, the scattered pile and the source. Goetz gave a long expressive sigh, his ordinarily heavy face lighting until it was more than covetous, until it reflected the satisfaction of a

long starved lust. That which he had followed doggedly, and for which he would have bartered his soul, he had found. He rested in the sight of it.

"I wonder how much it amounts to?" he said softly.

"Eh!" called out Mac, throwing back his shoulders as if he didn't care. "What? —How much! What do you want to worry over that for? Aint it enough, buddy? Enough, man, to buy everything in the world, an' more, by golly! An' it's all our find, Dutchy—"

"Yes," said Goetz, half under his breath, a sobbing realization, "but I wonder how much."

During the next two days they worked as dogs, getting the stuff out of the cabin to the deck, and then to the ground under the palms. Not a single piece of gold did they lose, so careful were they of this new found treasure. They cared no longer to explore. To get the coin back to the headland and their depot of supplies, and to wait for a ship, was now their only thought. Procuring canvas from the stores, they made a number of small sacks, and when they had filled these, they set about the task of transporting the gold. It was terrific labor, in the sun and an oppressive atmosphere, plowing through the heavy unlifting sand of the beaches, struggling under the most precious bulk in the world, the one thing necessary.

At length their task was finished, and the gold stored with the now less precious articles recovered from the wreck. They could rest and contemplate it, seeing in its yellow glow their fortunes. No longer thought they of reviewing life. That which was past had been like a restless dream, oppressive and loathsome, from the unpleasant labors of which they had arisen to relief, to be refreshed by the vision of a future ease. It was only the future that occupied their minds now, the period to be turned into a revel, represented by this heap of gold.

After a long sleep they prepared to sum up the total wealth. They wanted to know how much they were worth. Sitting in the shade, they stacked the coin in little piles, making these as regular as

would have bank tellers, stopping now and then to view it lovingly.

"An' to think I was onct down to a busted jackknife," said Mac slowly. "I can remember that time well—an' me wit' nothin' to eat for two days."

"An' what you t'ink of me anodder dime in 'Frisco, beggin' from the Salvation Army," grunted Goetz, savagely. "Well, we'll do no more of that, Mac!"

"No!" cried Mac, shaking his fist. "But I'm goin' back to that town where I was stranded them two days, an' I'll make it look like a red paint shop when the hoops come off'n the barrels. That's me! I'll show 'em, everyone, the miserable lot of scavengers. They watched me walk about starvin', an' by the Pilot! they'll see me do the millionaire act, too."

"Nod me," said Goetz, cautiously. "This'll set me up all righdt. There's a place over in Brooklyn." He spoke as if Brooklyn were within sight. "It's a goodt business, und my brodder he wanted to buy it oudt onct; but he couldn't see the money. I'll gedt that saloon for me. Aldso, I want to lift the mortgage off'n my uncle's house."

"Awh, g'wan!" sneered Mac, disdainfully. "Liftin' mortgages, what!"

"Yah!" nodded Goetz, his eyes narrowing down. "He's an oldt skinner himself. Undt I'll gedt the mörtgage, undt squeeze him to a pulb—like that—"

And Goetz caught up some sand to crush in his fist.

"Oh!" Mac sighed, relieved, going on with his counting.

Finally they leaned back and stared at each other.

"How much?" asked Goetz.

"Twenty t'ousand, I make it, Dutchy."

"Sure, that's it; ten t'ousand for you, undt the same for me. Well!"

"Looks pretty good for us, eh?" grinned Mac, resting on his elbow.

"Aindt they beauties!"

And the covetous look spread over Goetz' face as he jingled a few coins to hear the sound of his wealth.

But were they a thousand times richer, they must wait for a ship. No sail lifted on the rim of the sea, and

the days dragged away without event. Save that they had a new topic for argument and speculation, they were no better off. They had changed, however. The gold, the one thing necessary, had come into their little drama, narrow as was the stage, and its weight leaned on them heavily.

Before this find they had been at an irksome peace; now they knew an equally irksome disquiet. Where had been light words and occasional laughter, now they swore wearied oaths and frowned constantly. A thousand suspicions and doubts worried them.

Suppose they were not the only inhabitants of this island; suppose a ship never came to take them off; suppose those who came demanded a share of their gold; suppose others were cast ashore. These things they argued over and over, planning against every imagined attempt to seize their gain.

Goetz proposed to *cache* the whole treasure, and if taken off the island to return for it; but this only presented difficulties and chance for failure. Mac recalled a fellow who went about talking of buried treasure, and who sought help to aid him recover it, and who had been considered a lunatic for his trouble. No; if taken off the island by a passing ship they would have to risk the captain's honesty. They would pay passage and fight for the stuff if necessary. It was worth a fight, since they had fought like dogs for less; and they swore oaths to defend it.

Nevertheless, they became careworn in the thought of its loss, and Goetz prevailed on Mac to agree to hide the gold. It could be easily got at when the ship came, and, meantime, if anything happened of an unforeseen nature, it would be known only to themselves. So they buried it, all of it with the exception of a small sack that Mac held out, to be used in case of emergency. They might need some money by them, he said, and Goetz laughingly agreed.

"We might want to buy something, yes?" said Goetz.

"Yeh never know what's goin' to happen," Mac counseled. "Even here, we might have use for money. When yeh've

got it, keep it handy, on'y don't let the other feller suspect that yeh've got it. Anyway, it's been so long since I had a stake that I like to look it over every so often."

"Sure, I know idt," Goetz chuckled. "I know all aboutt idt. Idt's yust like a deaf an' dumb friendt, close undt comforting."

And having buried the gold, they went back to their old life on the headland, watching the wide expanse of sea. They

tation; they had not a moment's peace.

Mac said he would barter the whole pile for a berth on a 'Frisco bound schooner; Goetz was not so extravagant, but he said the captain could hold him up for half and he would gladly make the bargain. So they drifted through the long sunny days, exiled and despairing, so different in temperament that they almost hated each other because of each other's helplessness, and the pitiful remarks they would make to break the



He lunged across the board

loll'd through the long monotonous days, growling at the fate which bound them when the world promised so much. A dozen times a day Mac would spring to his feet, sure that he had caught a glimpse of a dirty sail low down on the horizon, and a dozen times they would race to the beacon, and a dozen times would they acknowledge amid curses that they had been mistaken once more. Perhaps they could have borne these disappointments better, were it not for the gold. It goaded them to feverish expect-

dreary silences. Exhausting all of the simple amusements, and having become sick of planning for those days which they might never see, they sat down to the cards again. Goetz had grunted a disapproval when Mac first suggested a game.

"What's the use," he said, puffing at his pipe. "There's nothin' to play aboutt."

"Nothin'?" drawled Mac, meaningly.

Goetz turned and looked at him from dull, uninterested eyes; slowly he under-

stood the invitation; he peered at the other searchingly, and his lips moved.

"The goldt!" he said.

Mac shrugged his shoulders as if Goetz had meant to censure him; for the moment sobered, he shuffled the cards idly, and then with a ring of bravado, of challenge, in his voice, said:

"Well, what good is it, anyway; we can't eat it."

Goetz shook his head sagaciously, refusing to be tempted.

"Mac! gambling between friendts aint goodt; remember that time you was in Baltimore, yes?—undt signt on a cattle-ship?"

Mac had long refrained from the suggestion, but now it had slipped out, he sought to persuade Goetz and to justify himself. There was no sinister motive behind his proposal. Filled with the disgust of monotony, he knew the game would lend a touch of excitement to an otherwise dragging existence. He did not envy Goetz his share of the gold, and at the moment, sincerely, he cared little for his own.

Goetz was reluctant, and filled with a pious argument. His was a shrewd nature, steeped in suspicions, rather those of the miser than the gambler, since he feared losing. What if they sighted a ship when he was behind in the game? He did not dare, and he pleaded friendship.

"Awh!" yawned Mac, "it's a lot of worthless truck. Don't be a quitter. I'll give yeh odds."

"Tell you what," said Goetz, timidly, "we wont play for keeps, see; we'll divide when the ship comes, like idt is now—yes?"

"Sure!" drawled Mac. "It'll keep interest in the game."

He brought back the sack they had reserved and counted its contents. Two hundred coins; Mac figured these. He pushed half across to Goetz and said, with a laugh:

"There, Dutchy! bet yourself blind, like a big buck; a hundert a chip, an' that'll cover the whole pile."

"Bud remember, my friendt, we divide equal afterwardts."

"Of course, Dutch, you old woman,"

replied Mac, his manner earnest, but the assurance diminishing in tone to indecision.

They played throughout the long afternoon, and when they quit the game, Goetz counted his coin with some exhibition of a mellow humor.

"You oughdt to be gladt we aint serious aboutt it," he said. "What you t'ink of that—two thousand winner, eh?"

"That's the way it goes," answered the imperturbable Mac, grinning sheepishly. "Lose wit' a smile. That sent me 'round the world for the price of ninety miles. But what's the use—play you to-morrow for the cash stuff," and he jingled a handful of coin carelessly. It made a very pleasant, golden sound, soft and heavy and rich.

Goetz thought about it that night. Mac wanted excitement and Goetz had watched Mac's usually reckless play when on shipboard. Also, ten thousand dollars was not near enough for Goetz's schemes when the ship came. He might increase this, and without reproach, since Mac had suggested it—begged him into it. Why not play—the ship might never come, and Mac would only squander the money painting some town red, as he had promised to do, if they were picked up. Why not? He could not preach to himself.

They went to their several morning tasks without mention of the subject.

It was not until afternoon that Mac threw out the cards.

"Come on, Dutch," he bantered, "let's have a real game. Win if yeh can. I'd give the whole of it to sight a decent ship, that I would, an' call it cheap, too."

Goetz hesitated, wavered, and sat down.

"All righdt," he said, puffing his lips.

Mac shuffled and dealt the cards. Immediately their faces became as grave as judgment. They scanned the hands; there was no more friendship between them. The gambler recognizes no friend save the winning card. He prays to the god of all chance for a triumph and another's downfall.

The luck swung back and forth. Goetz played a tight game, willing to win a little. Mac gambled as a braggart, care-

less of his losses, and by the coming of night had parted with two thousand of his share. Though the cards ran evenly throughout the entire week, Mac lost steadily, a little and a little more, winning now and losing twice the amount later, until on the seventh day he had dropped another thousand.

"What do I care," he said, shrugging his shoulders.

Nevertheless, he had not counted on the German winning continuously, and Goetz angered him by plainly showing a satisfaction.

"Wait a bit," said Mac to himself.

They gambled regularly now, many hours daily. Neither would have admitted that the fever of gain possessed him. Gradually, however, this showed indirectly in every move.

Mac became irritable, suspicious of trifles, and over-sensitive when the play was done. He neared the loss of four thousand now, and was bent on forcing his poor luck.

Such a temperament did not invite peace. And the spirit of evil grew in Goetz as surely, if by other channels. He was captive to the lust of avarice now. He argued that he had offered to make the game one of counters only, but Mac had refused; therefore, let him abide by his decision.

Mac had yielded absolutely to the soul-wrecking vice. Once a card lay under his knee for hours. It was an ace. This became a growing habit, and there would be two cards under his knee, usually aces. The luck changed a trifle. Mac won. He would hold aces with a persistency that invited suspicion. Goetz required time in which to have his sluggish spirit aroused, but a slip was made in the play and he caught a glimmer of the truth. His heavy, beast-like anger began to burn; slowly it grew into a white glow down under the crust of him. Notwithstanding that he had won fairly, he was being robbed. His wrath grew with the losing of each dollar.

He could no longer restrain himself and he flipped the pack over and began to count the cards. Fifty-two fell from his fingers.

"What's wrong wit' them cards?" asked Mac, nastily.

"I t'ought we mightd have lost some," came the doubtful reply.

"Oh! you did!" sneered Mac. "Well, you watch out that you don't lose 'em, an' I'll promise that I wont."

"Don't be foolish," growled Goetz, picking up his pipe.

He was very watchful. He could not understand it. Mac changed his play and sought to lull him into security; but the wrath of Goetz did not abate, and Mac hated him with the insolence that follows discovery.

Goetz had lost two thousand back to the other, and was three ahead of the game. He considered that he had been robbed of the two thousand, and he was sore about it. He watched the deal and the discard. Neither of them thought of a ship now; the game and the stake it held was their whole life; Mac's eyes showed a tricky cunning, and in the glance of Goetz was a glint of malice. Mac dealt the cards swiftly, and talked with the flippancy of a winner. Goetz sat hunched up, saying little, his face heavy and his eyes half closed. He seemed the picture of a sleepy inaction, but—he had lost more than two thousand dollars, and he continued losing.

"That's a big pot, Dutchy, near five hundred," said Mac.

"Sure idt is."

"I open it for two hundred—"

Goetz slung his coin across with a sluggish movement.

"T'ree cardts, I'll take," he growled grudgingly.

"Two here," followed the quick snip of Mac's dealing.

"I t'ought so, you dog," yelled Goetz, throwing himself at Mac's throat. He had lunged across the board as if sprung from a catapult. The coin jingled and rolled, the cards whiffed in every direction, and the two men fell, striking at each other heavily.

"Dealdt from the bottom, will ye!" growled Goetz, aiming a blow at Mac's face.

"I'll kill yeh for that," cried Mac, viciously.

Mac was the quicker in a scuffle, and



His glance swept the sea

Goetz could not prevent his squirming free. Once on his feet, Mac ran for the hut. Swearing and panting, Goetz followed, but he stopped short when Mac came out with a knife in his hand. There was no chance for Goetz to secure a knife. These were all in the hut. So he turned and ran for his life, up the beach and into the tangle of wildgrowth of the higher ground. He could hear Mac behind him, and knew Mac meant to fight.

Goetz spurred to reach the headland;

he knew he would find a club there, at the beacon; but he was running slower with each stride, for he was a heavily built fellow and had smoked too much. He could hear the quicker footfalls of the other man. Mac was gaining. Goetz staggered up the last few feet to the hill top and seized a heavy piece of wood. Mac was fairly on him, his teeth set and his face showing a nasty decision toward wickedness. Goetz could not evade him, and was slow in swinging his club,

so that Mac's first thrust caught him in his arm.

Goetz uttered a pained cry, the scream of an infuriated beast. What he might have done before was entirely lost in what he meant to do now. He had been robbed, cheated, threatened, wounded, and he must fight for his life. He swung upward the club and stepped forward. Fury half blinded him, yet he noticed without caring that Mac had called out, an entreaty probably, a warning possibly; but Goetz cared not what was meant; he was no longer master of himself. With a smothered malediction he struck down—

Goetz swayed and trembled, wiping the blood from his arm. Then he turned and his glance swept the sea as he drew air into his exhausted lungs. He uttered a stifled cry of wonder. There, on the glassy waste was a tiny speck, a dirty rag of sail. It was only a tiny blot wavering on the curve of the world. A terrorizing thing to see, if it would be seen only to disappear; a vision of hope, and perhaps a despair.

Goetz forgot all else and shrieked out: "Mac! Mac! gedt a light! Matches—quick! they don't see us! We must light up a hell of a fire, undt—"

The call trembled away to a whisper. Mac had not moved and did not. Goetz grew white of face. He shook the other, screamed into his ears, struck him at the first throb of panic. Rushing off to the beach, he came back in a staggering condition with water. There was an aching pain in his heart and a terrible paralyzing dread.

But water did not bring Mac to life. Goetz slowed in his efforts to arouse him. Looking off to sea again, he could scarcely smother a cry of joy. The ship had lifted over the rim, out of nothing, and she drew into the island. He must light their beacon-fire and run up the flag; he must—then his face blanched, and he muttered to himself hurriedly, looking down at that inert result of the game.

"He is deadt—deadt! Undt when they come, what can I explain—they will say, 'Why?'—undt then—then, they will get oudt the irons, undt then—"

A terror seized him. He must efface both of them. Like a man gone mad he set to work. After carrying the other into the vines, he came back as a felon eluding swift pursuit, and began to destroy the evidence against himself. There was everything to lose, even the gold. The pile on the headland he did not light, but scattered; the staff they had rigged for a flag, he tore down.

"She will be two hours comin' up," he panted. "Gott! all to do in two hours!"

Like a fiend he worked, even making one attempt to tear down their hut, but this had been built too solidly and he dared not fire it. He hoped the ship would bring up on the far side of the headland, where lay the wreck of the old *Stamboul*, and this would be likely. Finally he believed that he had done all possible to efface himself. He must not be caught; out of the world, he must not be dragged back into it and to punishment. Trembling from his labor, he fled from rescue and justice.

Late in the afternoon he watched the ship from a distant point. A crew pulled a boat ashore, landing near the wreck as he had expected. There were casks in the boat; they had come for water; an hour passed and they rowed off again. He saw the boat lifted at the davits, and in the stillness heard a creaking as the foresail was set. He watched the death-like creeping of the ship's head as she came up into the light wind.

Slowly she drew away. Soon there showed but a dirty rag of sail again, low down in the red sunset. He left cover and stood staring at it, a tragic figure, condemned, forgotten.

He crept back to the deserted camp. How long would he have to wait until the next rag of sail?—how long alone?—how long?

God! the quiet grew big and the stealthy night came on. When he heard a sound out of the dark, he sprang up and cried:

"Mac! Mac!"

No answer.

The sullen stars burned through the black to look on him—the Castaway.



The compositions occupied her attention

Appealing to Caesar

BY MARION HILL

Author of "The Pettison Twins," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. BENSON KNIPE

BOUND California," said Esmee Terris, still sweetly.

She had been saying it at intervals all through the irksome half hour, but she did not allow her voice to betray her flagging interest in the confines of her beautiful native State, nor did she permit herself to be as peremptory as pedagogues sometimes are.

For one thing, she had been teaching only a few months; consequently, the fine edge of her amiability was still unblunted; and, for another thing, she was too small to dare run the risk of antagonizing her rural charges by using sternness where coaxing would answer.

Her littleness, taken in conjunction with the woes of her profession, had aged her sensibilities till she felt about thirty, causing her totally to forget that she was but twenty; moreover, so aspiring were her hopes and aims, she likewise failed to remember that her head, in spite of its dominant bow of ribbon,

was not high enough to reach much above the railing of the ancient desk over whose top she issued her geographical invitations. These forgettings were good things, too, because it was owing solely to her indomitable unconsciousness of weakness that she was enabled to maintain her pretense of control.

"Bound California," wheedled Miss Terris again, eyeing Libbie Higgins with gentle caution and distrust.

Libbie Higgins, that Teacher's Terror known tersely as a "bad" girl, worse than any "bad" boy on record, surged from her seat with a sulky scowl. For this some geographical intricacies on the East were mainly responsible, and she tugged downward at her skirt and upward at her "pompadour" before submitting to the indignities of a recitation.

"Cal'forny," snarled Libbie, "now, Cal'forny, she's bounding on the top by Ore-gun, she's bounding on the East by Nevada and a wiggle, on the bottom

by a piece of yellow and on the West by the Pacific Ocean."

Having personally contributed to the lesson, Libbie now dismissed geography from the course of study and sat abidingly down, closing her book and leaning back in her seat to indulge unvexed in alien thought.

Esmee Terris inwardly quailed at the idea of disturbing Libbie's retirement from public life, but she had it to do, and, as she never shirked a duty even though annihilation might lurk near, she asked,

"Bounded on the East, by what, Libbie?"

Libbie jerked herself into the aisle again and spoke with the force of one who was humoring a lamentable deafness.

"Bounding on the East by Nevada and a wiggle."

She remained standing, the better to repel and defy any second criticism.

"A wiggle," mused Miss Terris.

Her pondering was broken into by the virile man's voice of Tuck Hunter from a front seat. Tuck was always seated up in front, not because he was loved but because he could be watched.

"She means the Colorado River," jibed Tuck.

Then he flushed angrily, not ashamed of having spoken unbidden, that being his general habit, but ashamed at the two thoughts: that he had betrayed his own proficiency and had perhaps been helpful. It was against Tuck's scheme of existence to be helpful to anything in the guise of a teacher, or to evince interest in education. He counted it among his misfortunes that he was fascinated by geography, learning it in spite of himself.

"Raise your hand for permission before you speak, Tuck," said Miss Terris, paling.

Of this hulking delinquent she was much afraid. It took courage for her to notice his lapses. The word "lapse" is misused in this connection, however. When Tuck "lapsed" it was into occasional inoffensiveness, his fixed habit being rebellion.

Upon her rebuke, Tuck mumbled a

confidence apparently to the blackboard: he said he didn't need his hands to talk with. Surrounding sniggers, turning discreetly into coughs, testified to the fact that Tuck was not without admirers.

Ethereal peace descended upon the room—everybody was waiting hopefully for a contest.

But gentle little Miss Terris quickly made up her mind not to interfere with confidential remarks to the blackboard, so she pretended not to hear and confined her struggles to Libbie.

"And you must say North and South, Libbie; not top and bottom."

"Same thing," said Libbie, nonchalantly yawning.

"Oh, no, Libbie!" Miss Terris was more beseeching than prohibitive.

"Isn't the top, North?"

"Yes, but—"

"Well, then." Libbie's tone was settling.

Esmee Terris thought up a masterly correction.

"But if you turned your book upside down, Libbie, your North would be South!"

Libbie dismissively shrugged her shoulders; cardinal idiosyncracies were palling on her.

"And what is the name of the 'piece of yellow,' Libbie?"

"Hasn't any."

"Oh, yes!"

"Not in *my* book."

"Go to the wall-map and find it. Bound California, Stuart."

Stuart was Miss Terris' stand-by, a fat lump of natural docility, comforting in a crisis. Stuart went around his state without a hitch and sat down weltering in rotund smiles.

"Bound California, Tuck."

"Dunno how," fibbed Tuck, spoiling for trouble, battle-lust in his eyes.

For a second time, the noisy room hushed expectantly. Esmee Terris grew faint at heart, thinking a conflict imminent, but noticing a restlessness among the smaller children, she made it an excuse to temporize.

"Then study, Tuck, while I hear the primer class."

She cheered vividly while lining up

her baby charges, tilting her pretty head sideways and bathing the little ones in a preliminary smile, getting a return smile all along the line.

Under huddled brows, Tuck scowled at this picture, unwillingly fascinated with her, as with his geography. Because he hated her authority, he therefore hated her prettiness.

"Conchichita, spell 'owl,'" she begged of a mahogany-hued little Mexican girl with liquid eyes, misleadingly brilliant.

Conchichita lit up like a church.

"O-l-e, owl," she said swiftly, trying not to be indecent in her satisfaction.

Waving brown hands called spirited attention to error, at which Conchichita smiled pleasantly. She had more heart than brain.

"No, petty," said Miss Terris, with caressing gloom. "Listen to Tim. You can spell it, can't you, Tim?"

Tim nearly nodded his head off.

"Then spell it."

"Owl?" demanded Tim.

In the baby class, things so often turned out to be not what they seemed, that Tim never took chances.

"Yes, honey-boy; owl."

"O-w-l, owl."

"Write it," praised Esmee Terris, conveying a reward.

Raptured, Tim sidled to the black-board, there to print and smear and chalk and erase and perspire for five heavenly minutes.

"Now, Conchichita."

"O-l-e, owl," repeated Conchichita cheerfully, quite willing to keep on spelling owl till midnight.

For Conchichita's development, *Owl* was drawn upon the board, its face being charmingly sketched in a round O, its winged body in a W and its legs in an L.

"Now spell it, petty."

Delirious with glee, smiling gloriously at the bird, Conchichita spelled. "O-l-e, owl," she chanted.

Wisely sidetracking "petty's" brain to something else, Miss Terris showed her delighted watchers how to draw other letters before the sketch, for the magical evolving of "fowl," "howl," and "scowl." Next, the little ones made some

sentences for teacher to print on the board—which was grammar and composition; next day they repeated the sentences—which was reading; lastly, they copied them—which was writing. But it was all a lovely game.

Smilingly, Miss Terris dismissed them not only from the class but from the school building, it being the hour for them to go, waving them a friendly farewell as they scurried out of the door and away through the woods, where their bird-like chattering died in the distance.

A sigh swept over the room which Miss Terris had not the heart to rebuke. Freedom *would* be nice! But this final hour was composition hour among the older pupils and meant plenty of work. The course of study requiring "language lessons upon the familiar phenomena of nature," Miss Terris had selected the extremely familiar one of "Rain," upon which phenomena she had talked and taught for a week.

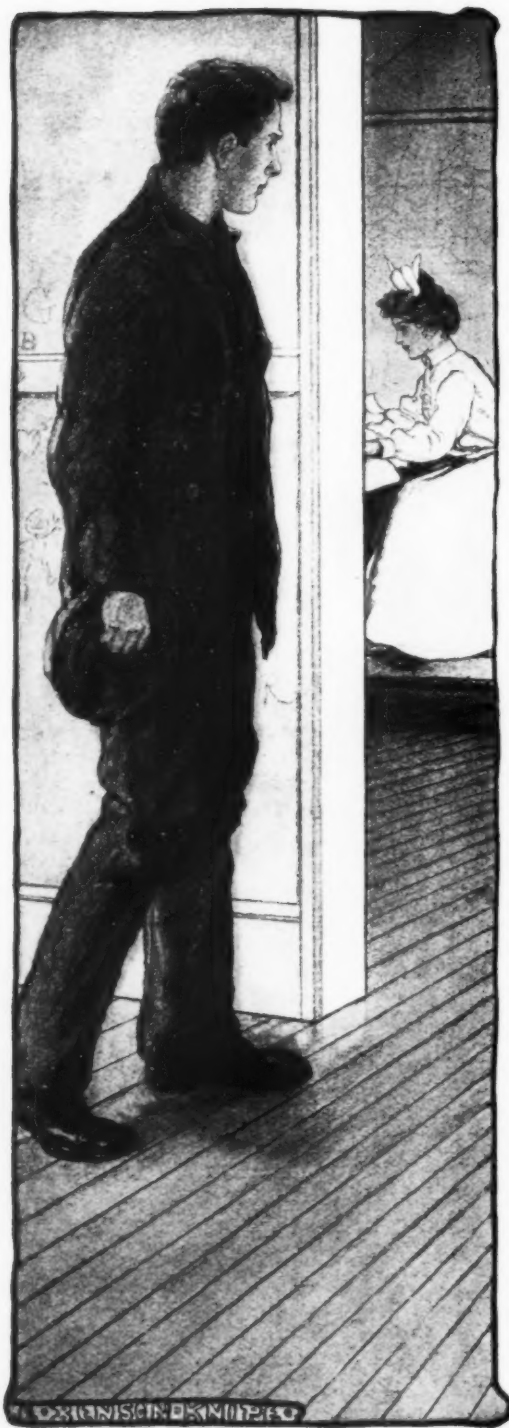
She distributed composition-books, filled ink-wells, replaced abused pens, went from desk to desk advising, exhorting, commending, pulling out ideas with the difficulty of a dentist extracting teeth, and altogether putting in an hour of much perambulation and stress. Finished, she gave out the home lessons, dismissed the class, and took up the books, while the pupils were getting ready to depart.

Coming to Tuck's book, over which he had been scribbling with rare diligence, she found that he had refused to "compose" and had merely written rain, rain, rain, to infinity.

He was very pleased with himself, wanting a chance to be insolent before the admiring rest, aching to be told to remain after school, in order to refuse. Defiant and six feet tall, he was secure of carrying all his points and therefore glanced at her quite invitatively, while the others lingered around covertly eager for a scene.

She looked at him frightened, but with cold displeasure, her estimate of him flashing from her eyes. Then she put it in words.

"You think you have been 'smart,' Tuck Hunter, but you have merely been



"Tuck" Hunter

a sneak and unkind. You wanted to annoy me and you have. People generally get what they work for. Had you strong, good sense, Tuck, you would work for something worth while. If I felt sure that you had a man's generous disposition to match your man's size, I should tell you to remain after school and would try to teach you. But I am not going to tell you. You might not be bright enough to obey. Obedience to authority takes a very rational intellect, Tuck. Disobedience belongs to bullies. You are very disobedient. You disobey me because I am small and you are big. So manly! You must not think, however, that I am without redress. Surely you are aware that I could have expelled you long ago. Why do you suppose I have never done it? Because expulsion would shut you out of lessons which you need more than anyone else in the district. I have been sent here to teach, just as you have been sent here to learn; and if I shirked my duty as you do yours, if I expelled you to save myself the annoyance of teaching you, I should be a lazy coward as you are, Tuck. Go home! Go home, everybody. Good-night."

Turning resolutely away, she took the armful of books to her desk and sat down to correct them. The boy was sodden with anger. She had shown him that her mind could look down upon him even if inches could not. He rocked sullenly back and forth on his feet for a moment, hunting among her words for a loop-hole through which to shoot back. Finding none, he darted a vindictive look at her by way of leave-taking and slouched out after his associates. Not long, and the last sound of their voices had died outside.

Miss Terris was as comfortably alone as upon a desert island. The little wooden school-house made an incongruous new scar against the green of pines and oaks, no other

building being within a mile. The big warm mountains closed around it like walls. Towering in serene watchfulness above the lesser peaks was noble old Loma Prieta, seemingly so ubiquitous as to show up at the end of every vista the eye chanced to take.

"Just as a—A Person—can fill the mind and be at the end of every thought," mused Miss Terris romantically. She had been interested in a—A Person—lately.

At present, however, the compositions occupied the entirety of her discouraged attention.

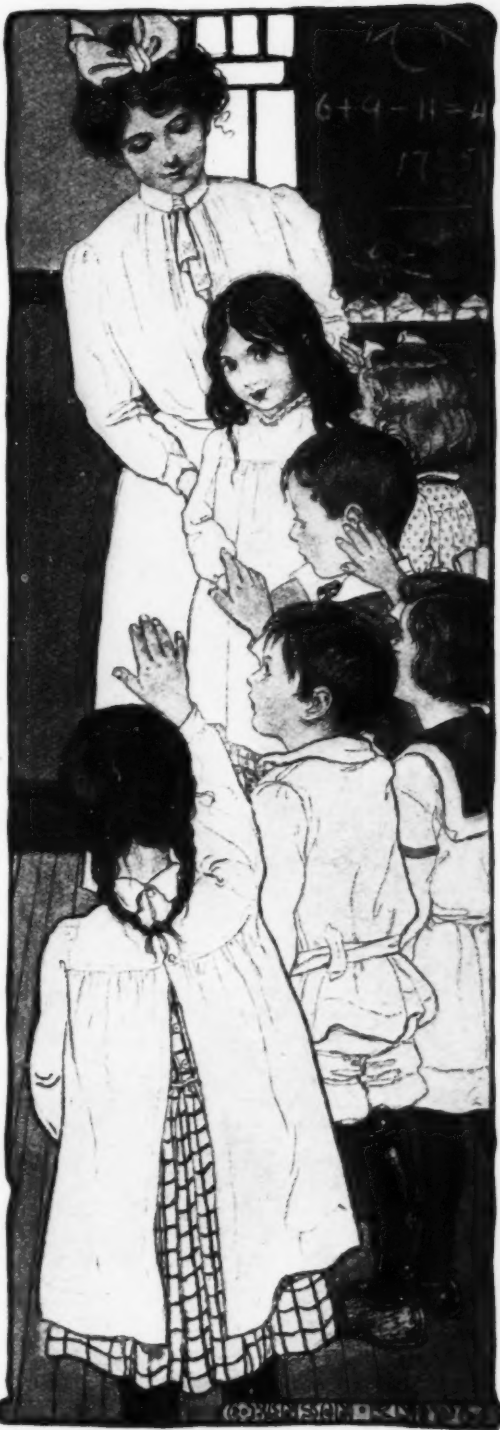
They ran along these lines:

RAIN.

The use of rain is because it is wet and fills up rivers and fills wells. This is how rain is. rain is moychure, and this moychure is took up by clouds and carried along by wind and let down when it hit a cold stratter. Thunder is a space made by hot weather with lightning, the two spaces run together which is thunder. But it don't hurt none. Rain makes the flowers grow and the grass onct it rain for 40 days and 40 nits and made anamils in the ark wich shows the rath of God. The end.

The writers were not imbeciles. Far from it. Many of them, though, were foreigners whose parents were employed in lumber camps. To these, the English language, always a mystery, became really a menace when conjoined dangerously with ink.

In the lonely loveliness of a long California afternoon, Miss Terris plodded faithfully through the astonishing medley. Emboldened by silence, rats and mice gnawed at the woodwork, squirrels and birds hopped triumphant tattoos on the roof and many beetles sprawled busily from crevices. Occasionally, Miss Terris glanced from the window to note the progression of the sinking sun and to watch the development of a social call made by a horned toad upon a tarantula. Barring snakes, she was tolerant of the



Waving brown hands called attention

whole animal kingdom. A slight noise in the vestibule she interpreted to mean either a rabbit or a coyote, and she dreaded the one no more than the other.

Finally, the shadow of Loma Prieta, dropping like a sudden pall across her desk, she slipped the papers away at once, knowing that an uneasy dusk would soon settle over the woods and make it hard for her to keep the home-trail.

Shutting the windows and taking her entirely ornamental sunbonnet off its peg to slip as usual upon her arm, she swung unconcernedly into the vestibule, there to receive the start of her life. Almost as if hanging from the nails which daily propped the innocent hats and caps of the children, a silent man lounged in its gloom. A look, and her choking fright passed—a little.

"Oh, it is you, Tuck!" she said, coldly. "What do you want?"

His answer was to lunge forward and grip her by the wrist.

"Stop that, right away!" she said indignantly.

By way of obeying, he grabbed her other wrist.

"Now, Miss Terris," he said with ugly satisfaction, "I got yer where I want yer."

In terror's oddly calm daze, she looked at her wrists with the sole thought that he was holding them unnecessarily tight, puffing her flesh out from under his vise-like grip.

"One finger would do," she said contemptuously. "I couldn't get away."

"Yer not goin' to git away," he promised, goaded by her sarcasm. "It's my turn. When I'm through, I wont git no more sass from you—er—front of others. Yer thought yer'd settled me, didn't yer, a few weeks back, when yer had yer feller come here and lam me?"

"Speak the truth," she cautioned undauntedly. "The gentleman whom you vulgarly term my 'feller' is a school-trustee, and I asked him emphatically *not* to 'lam' you."

"He done it, though!"

"And you needed it!" she said firmly.

The furious grasp tightened on her wrists.

"Yer slick with yer tongue," he com-

mented, grim and sinister. "Yer sassed me, didn't yer? Now I'll sass some, myself."

He put her two hands in his one big one, grasped her around the waist and kissed her. She called out, instinctively—a futile performance in those deserted mountains.

"I'll help yer at that, Miss Terris," he said sneeringly.

And he let out a blood-curdling yell of "Murder!" holding her tightly the while they both bent their heads and listened to the sound sink harmlessly away among the trees. Then, with an evil smile, he let her go, intimating that she was so entirely helpless he did not even have to hold her.

"Jes' where I want yer," he repeated, threateningly. His expression was as blackly murderous as had been his cry.

Recalling that he had been sent to school by the logging company as a species of degradation, they being unable either to control or coerce him, reviewing his criminal reputation, she could no longer doubt that her situation was one of real danger.

"Tuck, isn't this awful?" she whispered, shudderingly.

Then she moved close to him and clung to his arm.

"I'm so glad you're here."

Her positive sincerity of relief petrified him with amazement.

"Glad I'm here?"

"When I'm frightened, I wouldn't be alone for anything!"

Out of her fair-weather past, she could conjure up no remembrance of a time when a big boy was not her natural protector, consequently she appealed confidently to Tuck; and this time *her* hands sought *his* wrists, clinging there like feathers and curling nervously around and around.

"Aren't yer afraid er me?" he asked angrily.

"Terribly. You are cruelly angry with me and we are all alone. We could scream till doomsday and no one would hear us. You could kill me. That's why I'm glad you are here—to help. I'd die without you. Don't go!"

She felt an involuntarily amazed re-



"In any trouble, Miss Terris?"

treat of his body and therefore held to him more clingingly.

Her dependence made him feel queerly important. For teachers in the abstract he had nothing but hatred; but for this particular soft handed one against his coat he evinced an irritated interest.

"Yer think I aint so unmanly, then, as yer made out?" he muttered, half-impatient, wholly uncertain. "Even ef I can't write compersition!"

"You can," she persisted, beginning to cry. "And you must."

A weeping teacher finished him. He

looked sorry. A second time, and timidly, he put his arm around her waist, noticing with a new shock and mental upheaval that she thankfully accepted the support and sobbed harder under the sympathy of it.

He was an uncouth ruffian, impossible to intimidate, impossible to cajole; he had been looked down upon unforgivingly and been looked down upon forgivingly. This was the first time he had been looked up to, and the effect was regenerating.

After an uneasy pause:

"There, Miss Terris, quit crying."

"I will if you will promise to see me home," she said, through quiet sobs. "It is so lonely and dark and there might be a snake."

"I'll take keer," he said vaguely.

He took the keys from her belt, locked the door behind them, and started home with her through the winding vagaries of the wood trail. She who had formerly harried him, all rebellious, through the mazes of loathed books, now looked to him reliantly to kick stones from her path, to shove aside branches, to disentangle thorn-boughs from her hair. He took to it doggedly but not unkindly.

Conversation being naturally difficult, neither did much of it.

Loma Prieta finally pried a whole sentence out of him. Staring conjecturally at its beckoning distances, he suddenly blurted,

"Miss Terris, I like countries. I'm goin' ter be a trav'ler."

"If so," she said somberly, "I'd learn while I have the chance, so as to know something when I went."

Resentment tried to flicker into his bold eyes but failed. Her teacher's persistence, which had hitherto but infuriated him, now played upon his safer risibilities. He turned away his head to laugh the slow, silent laugh of the mountain-folk. Hers was the impudence of the white mouse; and it won out.

"I'll try, Miss Terris," he muttered.

At this juncture things threatened to go wrong again. To their ears came the sound of a man's near footsteps. Tuck Hunter recognized them as quickly and unerringly as she.

"It's yor fel—it's that feller, that Bud Sweet. Lopin' around ter show off some more!"

Crashing cheerily through the branches, Bud Sweet was soon upon them. The three stood curiously at gaze.

Between the girl and the newcomer, who was in hunting garb, gun in hand, and who looked the personification of all that was desirable in a cavalier, there passed one of those swift, incomparably satisfactory glances which tell so little and yet tell all that is best to know. Her face gladdened perceptibly, worlds of welcome shining in her eyes. The hunting gleam in his died away into all sorts of tender lights. Tuck alone looked murderous, doubting not that his guardianship would be taken away from him, that he would be humiliated a second time before his enemy.

But Sweet barely flicked him a glance, his attention being riveted upon the girl's tear-wet eyelashes.

"In any trouble, Miss Terris?" he demanded ringingly.

Tuck sunk his head.

"No," said Miss Terris, with prompt certainty.

Tuck straightened and flung her a furtively odd look.

But Sweet raised his hat and slowly passed. Turning her head, she smiled him a promise of future revelations.

Again her face aroused his suspicions and again he challenged her.

"Been any trouble?"

"Yes," said Miss Terris, just as promptly and certainly.

The gun jerked under the clutch of its owner's grasp. Bud Sweet's face blazed.

"Want help?" he drawled.

With him, drawling was a danger signal. Esmee Terris cleverly clinched it, then and there.

"I have help, thank you. Tucker Hunter is seeing me home. Don't worry. I am quite safe. Good-night."

Tuck Hunter held out till he and his teacher were safely around a convenient turn. Then he broke down. His worried eyes held tears.

"I'll more than try, Miss Terris," he stammered. "I'll learn."

A Knight of the Little Round Table

BY P. H. HARRIS

THE Metropole was crowded with the after-theatre crowd, Manila was and is strictly the headquarters of those who "live to hear and drink some new thing," and to-night the sounds of worship very nearly drowned the strains of the Rizal Band. White uniformed waiters slid from table to table; "Rosie Aguinaldo's Waltz" wafted up through the palms and smoke thickened air; a general officer in the private dining-room wound up his toast amid the prolonged rain of Metropole applause; the proprietor rubbed his hands gleefully with what Billy Caldwell described as "a muscular chuckle;" the punkah waved lazily over the whole aggregation of men and money and another Manila night was in the borning.

The newspaper-boy and the sergeant, in the after-coffee heaven of satisfaction wonderful, were the sole gatherers around the Little Round Table in the corner never yet invaded by uninvited outsiders. The head waiter saw to that, for the Knights were one and all care free, unmarried, and lax disbursers.

The soldier leaned back in his chair and surveyed the mob thoroughly.

"Nobody here to-night," he grunted disgustedly. "Guess we'll just have to talk to each other."

The correspondent-attached-to-troops slumped woefully in his chair.

"Faulkner, you are old enough to know better, and I am wise enough not to ask you why, but it seems to me a pretty strange sort of a stunt for a man like you to be in the Army. Sometimes you have real interesting opinions and an occasional flitter of almost human intelligence crosses your countenance."

"Thanks."

"So, after that, I guess it's up to you to do most of the talking to-night."

"Well, Scribbles, it just happens that I'm looking at something right now which interests me greatly. Without un-

necessary and undue gymnastics you can observe a couple sitting at a table back of the big palm. It's worth the effort, for it's something you can't see every night. That's Sleepy Jim Wiley and his young wife."

The newspaper-man lolled a little more to starboard and gazed as directed.

"I wonder what in the name of tough luck he's dining with his wife for?"

"Well, he's my First Lieutenant and I know whereof I speak. He didn't bring her; she brought him. She's having a good time and he wishes devoutly that it was proper form to smoke a pipe after dinner in a place like this. I think he must be here from a sense of duty. Jimmy is always too tired to love his wife enough to take her out to dinner. That's the beauty of a West Point training. And his reward consists in a temporary respite from army canned goods and Gimpy McRee's nightly dissertation on the art of war. The reason I'm so interested is that, once upon a better time, back in God's country, I lost my presence of mind enough to propose to Jimmy's wife."

Faulkner paused and smiled gratefully at the recollection of that impetuous moment.

"Meaning, I suppose, that you're about to tell me your real name? I didn't think you would take me so seriously when I proposed to let you have the floor to-night."

"No, not that exactly. I guess if there's one thing on earth to my eternal credit it is that I have never cornered a man and bought enough successive drinks to warrant my telling him how my young life was blighted. And considering the number of rich men's sons and those who hint mysteriously at a dark and fearsome past whom one meets in this land of confidences-high-ballic, I think I've made a possible on the target-range of talk. The deponent saith nothing anent the girl, be-

yond remarking in passing that Jimmy and I are both taking orders now; she gives them to him and he gives them to me, may the Lord have mercy upon his soul. I guess I must have put too much brandy in that coffee. My first lesson is ended; Allah is great."

This was easily the longest speech the man in khaki had ever made regarding himself, a subject on which most men grow so eloquent that a wise girl doesn't have to trouble herself to find subjects for conversation.

The newspaper-man chuckled gleefully.

"I suppose congratulations are in order; I understand perfectly. His dutifulness is commendable."

"Duty, my boy, is a foreign tongue every man considers himself entirely competent to translate. The best translations are made on an empty stomach; for as the world insists on having it, the grander translations of duty are the stuff of which heroes are made. The narrow minded man can translate duty with such laborious strictness as to make a great thing mean; a broad minded man can allow a margin for notes. Be of good cheer, I am not about to theorize, it's too hot."

The newspaper-man stirred uneasily in his chair.

"I believe you're digging at me now. You're wrong about that cable to Washington; you mustn't consider yourself to blame. My newspaper instinct got the better of me that time, and Lord what a story it made! You couldn't be expected to know that I had a copy of the code, when you stepped out of the office for a minute—just long enough for me to copy the thing. It took a long time for me to get you to speak to me again, and I know you're not right sure of it now, but it's the honest truth, when I tell you that I've bumped into the best sort of stories without printing them. Even a newspaper-man has a heart. I wish I could prove it to you personally. I may be a 'deucedly human human, inhumane,' but I wouldn't print a story which would get a friend of mine in trouble or hurt him, and would do all I could to keep it out. I would for a fact."

The soldier smiled cheerfully at his fervent friend.

"Forget it, Billy Boy; there have been lots worse crimes committed in the name of journalism. You don't get the big stories anyway. They are never printed. It's just like the difference between the stage and sure enough life. I have never seen but one man die a proper, scientific, violent death on the stage. It was in 'Frisco; just a plain little old vaudeville sketch. The villain is standing at a window and is shot by one of his fellow bandits lurking out in the yard. There's a sofa right behind him and he has just called out 'I will not exact ransom from this girl, for she is mine own cheeld' when the fatal shot is fired. He wheels on his heel, does a flip-flop over the sofa, and winds up with the back of his neck resting on the sofa and his heels on the floor. His body stiffened, his throat cackled, his face contorted, one heel gave a final despairing bang on the floor, and it was the only correct imitation of *rigor mortis* I ever saw. That's just the way Ben Harley went out after taking on too much *bino*."

"The point is that tragedy may be right at your hand and you'll never see it at all."

"Faulkner, I'm not cruel enough to state that the gas is escaping somewhere around here, but I must say that I do believe you've put too much brandy in that coffee. Why this tragedy? Look around and see if there's anybody here we know."

A tall, brown civilian came wending through the tables before the reporter had finished his chiding.

"Marshall the sleuth, by all that's good. Mr. Marshall, shake hands with Mr. Faulkner. Mr. Faulkner, we now have a real sleuth in our midst. He is disguised to-night as a gentlemen. Gumshoes, we're just trying to think up a story and here you come. Now the Sergeant here has never heard that smuggling story of yours and it's pretty misty with me. Now, once upon a time—"

The detective shook hands and sat down to dab industriously at his streaming forehead.

"No; I've got one to-night that's a little better than that. It's short and true

and curious. Pardon me while I summon the fleet footed Mercury."

The reporter settled in his chair in happy anticipation of the short and true story, and happening to glance over at Faulkner, was surprised to note that the soldier was spilling more tobacco from his cigaret paper than is wont in a man of undiscovered nerves.

"Well, to begin right at the beginning.

"Once upon a time, way back yonder in the land of trolley-cars, a man shot a man. There was no reason for it beyond the fact that the man shot the man because he had insulted his girl. This story would never have been told if it had not been that the shooting took place in Maine. That was the unfortunate geographical mistake; the shooter and shootee were too far North. As men sometimes unfortunately do, the gentleman who was shot developed blood poison from his really insignificant wound and died. The father of deceased was a wealthy and influential man and started men hunting high and low for the man who had killed his boy.

"With the luck which follows the beginner at poker, this first offender got away entirely. An old crook would probably have been nabbed by the high priced Pinkertons within twenty-four hours. Swift was the name of the hot headed gallant who got away and he didn't belie his name. Also, he moved far and covered thousands of miles of territory strange to him as his new name. Tantalupijan; Guatemala; back on his tracks to Panama; Honolulu, India, Russia, a blockade running expedition to Port Arthur; and the Philippines followed rapidly. He took one good look at the farm hands then doing duty in this our fair city as policemen, and decided to stop for a while. Besides, he was broke and had to go to work. He had raised a beard and knew that people back in Maine were too busy voting for local option for him to run much chance of meeting old friends.

"He took the examination for civil service, and in course of time became the trusted lieutenant of the Captain of the Port of Manila. Mr. Bowles, the affable chief clerk, would have been hard to rec-

ognize as Danny Swift, the boy who had been behind the gun. He was a hard worker and had friends galore and had almost decided to tempt Dame Fortune and marry a school-mar'm. For he had forgotten the other girl and really liked the instructress very much indeed. He had even reformed his previous life to almost complete satisfaction, in anticipation of having to tell her that he didn't have any family back there, and one fateful day he met the Hoodoo Marine.

"Swift was going down the steps which led to the launch-landing in front of his office and the Hoodoo was coming up the same. He had known Swift back in Maine and had taken a long look at him as he came down the steps before speaking.

"'Danny Swift, how are you anyway?' he saluted our unfortunate hero with.

"'Pardon me, sir, but my name is 'Bowles'' came back from the rattled one.

"Swift got in his launch and crossed over to the Walled City to draw the monthly pay-roll for the office. As you can imagine, he was thoroughly frightened. Let a big healthy man be taken down with the pneumonia, and the surprise kills him as much as anything. It was that way with him; he almost thought he was an immune after all those hasty years.

"By the time his launch shoved her nose into the bank of Intramuros, Swift had made up his mind to take another long trip. It had come awful hard, but he saw nothing else for it, for he remembered the Hoodoo Marine of old, and knew that he would never rest until he found out how he had come to make such a mistake. Whether he meant well by him or not was of no importance in the desperate man's eyes, the main thing was that he had been recognized.

"When he got back to his office he called his assistant in, and without dwelling at length upon his reasons for so doing, told him that he had to leave town and wanted him to help him get away. I hope this isn't getting too long for you?"

The detective paused and looked at them with sociable questioning.

The soldier was leaning forward in his chair, his face strained, hard, taut; from over in Mrs. Jimmy's corner came a mocking laugh which made the reporter look up with strange annoyance.

"No, go on."

"Well, he turned over seventy-five hundred dollars to his assistant, along with the combination to the safe, refused his assistant's offer of money, and that night they sneaked out to the dark side of the good ship *Kowloon*, China bound. Swift was successfully hidden away in some coffee sacks, where the inquisitive customs minions might not look, and they told each other good-by.

"The assistant came back to the office, counted over the money again to make certain it was correct, and debated with himself as to whether he had better turn the money over to the bank for the night, as the transaction had been far from official. If he had done so, he would have saved the government seventy-five hundred and robbed me of a novel experience.

"When the safe was opened the next morning, the seventy-five hundred had flown. They sent me down on the case and it was really just too easy. Swift was a fine swimmer, and had merely jumped off the boat before she left the narrows, swum ashore again, slipped into the office past the sleepy watchman, opened the safe, chartered a small launch, and made his boat again. The *Kowloon* was due at Hongkong within forty-eight hours, so we just telegraphed the police there to search her when she got in and return our man.

"The theory was all right, but one thing upset it all. The one thing was that the *Kowloon* was wrecked, pieces of her masts being picked up by the transport *Sherman*. She went down with all on board beyond the shadow of a doubt, so this seemed to make a closed incident of the entire affair.

"About one year after this I was sent down to Batangas Province to identify a captured general of insurrectos. I was hiking through Liba one night and got too far behind the line, like a fool. Three *hombres* jumped out of the bushes with *bolos* and proceeded to do business right

away. My gun went back on me after the first shot, and they were just about to slip me a plate of *hari-kari*, when what I thought was another of the black devils came prancing down the road to beat the band. It was, blessed of all sights, a big sergeant of Uncle Sam's. He didn't do a thing to those warriors. The moonlight came a glimmering through the trees just as he ran up, and as you may have doubtless guessed by this time, it was Swift, again the man behind the gun.

"When I woke up there was a red haired nurse standing over me, with very large freckles on her very small nose. She said nobody seemed to know who the sergeant was who had jumped in so beautifully. I did all I could to find him, but he had never even reported this little incident of his day's work, and not knowing what name he was enlisted under I couldn't find him for a long, long time. I have often thanked the Lord since then that he had figured the right way, and had stayed ashore that night when he came back from the *Kowloon*, an event which gave him a mighty complete *alibi* when she went down. I don't know how he happened to wind up in the Army and don't care, for he certainly saved me from having my cards spelled M-U-D."

"What would you do if you found him?" said the reporter. "We had been discussing that side of it to-night."

The detective paused to light his cigar before answering, and the sergeant's glass tinkled to the floor as his hand clinched convulsively.

Marshall arose and leaning across the table, smiled down at the white faced soldier.

"I would ask him if he could forgive me for these round about thanks enough to take my hand. Mr. Man, put her there."

The Sergeant wrung his hand for a moment, tried desperately to control his voice, and did the talking with his eyes instead.

The reporter looked after the detective's retreating form in dumb, resentful surprise and heaved a sigh.

"I can now prove what I said, Stripesey, old horse. But, Gee, what a story that would have made."

Bread

BY MABEL NELSON THURSTON

ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY RALEIGH

(See Frontispiece)

VEAL? No, ma'am, I aint got any veal to-day—that is, I've got it, of course, but not of the kind I'd be willin' to sell to *you*." There was a strange, tender regretfulness in the butcher's tones, and his round blond face fell into lines of professional regret.

Then his voice brightened. "But I've got some prime lamb, Miss Chisers—the best I've had this season. Just came in an' I got first choice. I'd like mighty well to sell you a nice leg of lamb."

Miss Chisers' soul sickened. She knew it all so well—the sticky thud with which he threw the meat down on the counter, the unctuous familiarity with which he prodded it with his deft fist, the triumphant flourish as he sharpened his knife. More and more it seemed to her that all her life had been traveling in a dreary circle from her dingy brick house in the dingy brick block that proclaimed "Boarders" as far as the eye could see, to a succession of markets kept by blond, red-faced butchers, from the butchers to grocers, their floors covered with pyramids of the latest breakfast-foods; from the grocers to the dairy reeking with milk and butter, and so back to the dingy brick again.

As she plodded around the circle, sometimes clouds of dust swept by, filling eyes and nostrils; sometimes it was so hot that she could scarcely drag along; sometimes the streets were full of raw fog or glittering with sleet. She knew no other variety in the years. The monotonous drudgery had blotted out the memory of such lost treasures as youth and hope. There were only butchers and grocers and dairies and Mr. Neckar and Miss Haskins set in a background of wind and dust and fog and sleet.



Mr. Wentworth

It was half past ten when she reached the house. A colored girl in a sky-blue waist and purple skirt was waving her broom aimlessly about the front steps.

Miss Chisers stopped, the fretful lines deepening about her mouth.

"Henrietta, how often have I told you not to come out without a clean apron. And do you call those steps swept? Look at the dirt there and there."

Henrietta glanced cheerfully at the proofs of her guilt.

"Yas'm. Seems lak it slip under the broom while I'se a-wieldin' it—deed it does. An' Miss Haskins she says she's obleeged to speak to yo'. Pears lak she was discontented with her aigs dis mornin'!"

"Miss Haskins' egg is no excuse for your forgetting your apron," Miss Chisers answered, sharply.

It was foolish of her, she knew—when it was so difficult to keep help, but it seemed as if something inside her was speaking without her volition. She did

not recognize it, but it was Habit—Habit fattened and grown tyrant through the joyless years.

She carried her basket to the kitchen; then she climbed to the third floor front and knocked. It was a knock learned in the difficult but thorough school of experience, as was also her appreciation of the strategic value of the offensive.

"I hear you've been complaining of the eggs again."

The challenge was out, demanding an answer before the door was fairly open. The untidy, becurled woman who faced her hesitated, stammered, and then gave way.

"It wasn't anything, Miss Chisers—I—Henrietta forgets sometimes and brings them to me cooked too hard, and I merely reminded her, that was all. I shouldn't have spoken of it at all, but for my weak stomach. You know how it is when you have a weak stomach, Miss Chisers."

If Miss Chisers knew she kept her knowledge to herself.

"I'll see that they are right to-morrow," she replied, briefly. "Is that all?"

"I—yes, that's all, Miss Chisers. You understand why I mentioned it. My physician says I have a *very* delicate stom—"

But Miss Chisers was half-way down the stairs.

She went into her room and shut the door. There was some good old furniture in the room and a few books, but both furniture and books revealed neglect and indifference; it was a raw day and the room was full of the close, musty odor of the matting blistering in the dampness. Miss Chisers dropped into a chair beside a window overlooking the bleak area and bare yard. There was a stunted tree in the corner of the yard with a few straggling tufts of leaves—ininitely more desolate than no tree at all.

Miss Chisers regarded it with eyes that unconsciously accepted its symbolism.

"And they call this thing *life*!" she said, bitterly.

How long she sat there in her black musing she did not know. When she woke to consciousness of the present, Henrietta's voice, blandly forgetful of all unpleasantness, was at the door.

"Miss Chisers—Oh, Miss Chisers! Dey's a young man wants to see yo'."

"To see me?" Miss Chisers asked, opening the door.

Henrietta, serenely laboring for a union of skirt and waist by the means of a huge safety-pin, nodded with ready interest.

"He says he want to see yo'. He suttinly is got pretty ways."

Miss Chisers hesitated, mindful of Henrietta's frequent lapses.

"If you have let in an agent, Henrietta—you know what I have told you."

"No'm, he aint no agint," Henrietta declared confidently. "Don't you worry, Miss Em'ly—he looks lak he done cah'y good luck in his pocket sho'."

Impatiently Miss Chisers closed her door and went down-stairs; the smile upon her lips was ironical—*Good luck!*

But at the parlor-door she stopped; her dull drab self-contained figure betrayed no surprise, her dull drab face did not change, but nevertheless she was startled, shaken—as if suddenly she had come face to face with her own forgotten youth. For it was Youth that she saw there—Youth eager, joyous, disillusioned, with eyes like the morning—Youth laughing against a background of crinkled plush furniture and department-store pictures.

He was standing just inside the door, his hat in his hand, having risen evidently as he heard her step on the stairs. He was twenty, perhaps, but still unabashedly a boy; his dark hair, tortured by "cowlicks," had the effect of whirling about his smooth young forehead; his face, still boyish in outline, was full of lovable irregularities; but it was the eyes that spoke, the merry, laughing confident eyes of one who was a friend to all the world.

"Miss Chisers?" he asked, smiling as if there were some happy secret between them.

Miss Chisers stood stiff and dumb, looking.

"Yes," she answered.

"My name is Royal Carteret, and I came to see if you had a vacant room. I'm taking a course at the University this winter and the registrar gave me your



"That's a jolly view, you know"

name. It will have to be a small room—I suppose a hall bedroom or something of that sort; that's what poor students generally live in, isn't it?"

His voice implied that living in hall-bedrooms was an amusing joke of Fate's.

"I have one room vacant," Miss Chisers replied, "but it's fourth floor. I'm afraid you won't like it."

"Could I look at it?" he asked persuasively. "It sounds mighty like me!"

Without another word Miss Chisers turned and led the way up-stairs, the Boy following.

It was a dismal apology for a room. It contained a cot, a scratched chiffonier cherry stained; a corner washstand, chair and small table—the kind of room that has watched the hope die out of countless faces and despair carve its grim lines about laughing mouths; the kind of room that has waited for steps that dragged more and more slowly, more and more slowly.

The Boy gave a quick glance around and then stepped to the window. Below, the streets fell away by steep grades, and he looked out across a forest of chimneys and tree-tops to a shining blue strip of river and the distant hills.

"Why, it's great!" he exclaimed. "That's a jolly view. You know," with his air of friendly confidence, "I'm from the country and I reckon I'd be bound to get restless and want to knock things about if I couldn't see anything but brick houses. But this—"

"There'll be a bureau-scarf and curtains," Miss Chisers said.

She heard her own voice saying it, else she would not have believed it; bureau-scarf and curtains had never before been associated with the fourth-floor back.

"And the price?" the Boy asked, eagerly. "I'm not a Cræsus—behold my pockets! I'll find something to do while I'm studying, but till I do find something eight a week is my limit."

"This is eight a week." Miss Chisers replied.

The Boy tossed his hat on the bed and made her a bow.

"Yours to command, Miss Chisers," he declared.

Miss Chisers went down-stairs wondering. She had had young people before—anæmic, smoking youths, giggling, pompadoured girls. Probably Annette Daley was no older than the Boy by actual years, but one knew to look at Annette that she never had been young in her life, while the Boy—

"He won't stay," Miss Chisers said. "Nobody like that ever came before; he won't stay."

But upon a sudden impulse she went into the kitchen and made a loaf of chocolate-cake to go with the semi-weekly ice-cream. Usually they had with the ice-cream what Annette had named "As-it-were" cake; all the boarding-house keepers, Miss Chisers knew, served "As-it-were" cake with ice-cream.

The Boy was not at lunch, but in the afternoon Miss Chisers heard him running up-stairs two steps at a time, whistling as he went, and at dinner he was on hand promptly.

Miss Chisers performed the colorless introductions and then left him to make his own way; she herself went into the kitchen to carve the lamb while the soup was being served. Presently she lifted her head, listening. From the dining-room a gay wave of talk and laughter came in little bursts, broken by the swinging of the door, as Henrietta pushed it open to bring in the soup-plates.

"Even Mr. Wentworth," Miss Chisers exclaimed. "Well, of all things in the world!"

The talk and laughter went on all through dinner. Annette Daley's shrill high voice "carried" farthest, and when she heard that Miss Chisers frowned. Going into the dining-room after the boarders left, she caught a glimpse of a black head and blond pompadour at the foot of the stairs, and she frowned again savagely. He was like all the rest—any saucy, giggling girl that made eyes at them—

II.

But he was not like the rest. As the days passed, Miss Chisers acknowledged it. Moreover, he seemed to have settled down to stay. He was not a boarder—he was at home. It was scarcely a week before he had found his way to the kitchen where Henrietta and the cook frankly adored him. He discovered that Miss Chisers took her dinner after the boarders, and he fell into the habit of perching upon the radiator—if it wasn't too hot, and it usually wasn't—and chatting while she ate.

Miss Chisers was horribly embarrassed at first, but when, the fourth night, he failed to appear, she found the dinner had lost its flavor. He joked and laughed with Annette Daley, it was true, but he also entertained Miss Haskins and walked down-town with Mr. Neckar and held worsteds for Mrs. Crowley to wind and, topmost human achievement, thawed Mr. Wentworth to something like interest.

Mr. Wentworth was Miss Chisers' star-boarder. He was a lawyer, slightly gray, somewhat stout, silent, and stiffly courteous. In the six years that he had occupied the first-floor front he had never made a complaint, but neither had he addressed a dozen remarks to his landlady, aside from the monthly settling of bills. He was the one human being of whom Miss Chisers stood in awe. His colleagues, among whom he ranked as a rather dull fellow, good enough, but mighty uninteresting, would have stared in amazement at the suggestion of his being anyone's ideal. Miss Chisers explained it to herself by saying that he was "different;" upon the rare times that he had stopped and exchanged a few words with her, life always seemed lifted to a higher plane.

The first night that, through the half-open door, she heard the Boy's merry chatter in Mr. Wentworth's room, she acknowledged the rightness of it with a wistful sigh.

"They fit," she said.

It was that night a couple of hours later that the Boy, coming down from his room where he had been studying, knocked at her door.

"I saw your light through the transom and thought maybe you'd let me come in a moment," he said. "The fact is," smiling cheerfully at her, "I've got an awful dose of blues—homesick, you know."

Something caught at Miss Chiser's heart.

"You are going home?" she faltered.

The Boy, still smiling, shook his head.

"Can't afford it. Gee! Wouldn't I go if I could! You see—it's Her birthday day after to-morrow. Last year we had a picnic—it's all soft and warm and Indian-summery down there, you know. I tell you that was a *day*!"

"Her birthday?" Miss Chisers repeated.

"Jessie's," he explained. "Her name's Jessie McIvor. I've known her since she was as high as my knee."

He pulled out his watch and, opening it, looked a moment at the photograph inside, then silently held it out to her. It was evidently a head cut from an amateur photograph, but the eyes looked out with a sweet fearlessness from under the smooth young brow, and in the mouth was both tenderness and strength. Miss Chisers looked at it a long time before she handed it back.

"She's pretty," she said then.

He took it, closed the watch carefully, slipped it in his pocket and smiled at her again.

"That's why I'm homesick," he said.

He leaned back, his hands clasped behind his head, his eyes softly brooding. Miss Chisers waited, not knowing what to say. Presently he came out of his mood with a smile that recognized the silence and accepted it as more satisfying than speech.

"You remind me an awful lot, somehow, of my Aunt Eleanor. She brought us all up, Aunt Eleanor did. Mother was an invalid. Aunt Eleanor was just a girl when she came to live with us and she's stayed ever since. She could have married lots of times but she stuck by us. Tell you what, we think she's all right."

"I am like *her*!" Miss Chisers gasped. The Boy nodded.

"When you smile, there's something," he explained. "I noticed it the first time

I saw you. Maybe that was what made me want to come."

"But I don't smile."

Miss Chisers did not say it; it said itself.

The Boy looked at her with lovable assurance.

"But you're going to, you know," he said boldly.

Yet the next time he saw her she was not smiling—not even for him. It was a complication of domestic crises beyond his comprehension, even had he known them: the butcher had sent poor meat, the cook was in one of her tantrums, and Mrs. Crowley had declared that unless Henrietta swept her room better, she must leave.

Miss Chisers' lips were quivering; she had in fact reached the ragged edge of "nerves."

"Let me interview Mrs. Crowley," the Boy cried (she had confessed that much of the trouble). "I'll fix her in a jiffy."

"Oh, you mustn't," Miss Chisers protested.

But he was already gone.

He came back in ten minutes grinning wickedly.

"I have to inform you, Miss Chisers," he reported, "that the third front is engaged indefinitely. Your lady lodger is highly insulted, but you couldn't dislodge her with a crowbar. What did I do? Oh, nothing much. Just inquired very politely if the rumor I had heard of her impending departure was true, because I knew a couple of fellows at the University who were looking for just such a room."

"I don't see how you did it," Miss Chisers breathed.

"It was dead easy," he laughed, but his eyes searched her face gravely.

She looked shrunken and withered, as if life had ebbed away from her. It worried him. None of the women he had known in gay, laughing, lazy Prince George County had looked like that. The revelation came suddenly, lightning-sharp:

"It's fun she wants—she's starving for it."

Impetuously his thoughts swept back through the month he had been with her,

and from that to other months, gray, drudging, bare of laughter, that built themselves into the grim, pitiless years. Something dimmed his eyes and he hurried away abruptly.

But fifteen minutes later Miss Chisers

"I wish they'd *all* go. I'd rather scrub floors!" she cried.

She had not expected to find the Boy in the dining-room when she went in for her dinner, but he was waiting, perched upon the radiator. He tumbled from it



"Miss Chisers! And you want me to help!"

heard him dashing down-stairs, whistling gayly, and at dinner, wave after wave of laughter rolled out to her. She shut her lips grimly. Then justice reasserted itself:

"He kept Mrs. Crowley from going," she reminded herself; but the next moment a tide of revolt swept upon her.

and made a ceremonious dancing-school bow at her entrance.

"Miss Chisers," he said, "I have the honor to ask you if you will give me the pleasure of your company at the theatre to-morrow night. Margaret Ames in 'Twelfth Night.' I am assured she is a —peach!"

Miss Chisers stared blankly at his laughing face.

"What!" she cried.

He repeated the bow and the request.

"You know you can't refuse me," he said, audaciously. "I've done bought the tickets!"

"But why—what—" she blundered, helplessly. Then the vision vanished, and with a hard breath she drew herself together; she was once more back on the old familiar road.

"Of course I can't," she said sharply. "Go and take somebody else."

"But there isn't anybody else I want to take," he retorted unabashed.

"Take—Annette Daley."

He laughed.

"Tisn't polite," he reminded her. "The gentleman chooses, not the lady. The lady says, 'Yes, thank you. I shall enjoy it so much.' Don't you think you could manage to say it?"

It was no use—nothing but the truth would convince him. She said it bitterly.

"I can't go. I haven't a thing to wear. Now you know."

Apparently he didn't; he smiled at her, undismayed.

"Who cares about things? You've got a coat and gloves, I reckon."

She turned upon him with a fierce passion, all the bitterness of the joyless years in her voice.

"Do you think I'd go and be ashamed of myself all the time? If I can't go right, I won't go at all. And I can't—there's no way possible."

The Boy stood a moment, whistling softly. Then he turned away, but at the door he looked back.

"You're going all the same," he affirmed, "so you'd better be making up your mind."

He went slowly up the stairs; on the third flight he met Annette Daley dressed for the street. His face cleared suddenly.

"You're the very one I want," he said eagerly. "May I walk with you a little way?"

Annette tossed her head. "I don't know what he'll say," she responded, coquettishly.

"Was he coming for you?" the Boy asked, stopping.

"No, I was just going over to Mamie Conover's; only if anybody should happen to see me with another gentleman—"

"Tell him," the Boy laughed, "that it was a work of necessity and mercy. I'm in an awful hole and I expect you to pull me out."

The girl gazed at him mockingly.

"Mercy!" she said. "You seem to be standing up under it pretty well."

"That's because it hasn't had time to show how it's wearing on me. It's a stunner, I tell you. Wait till we get out of here."

They went down the stairs together and down the steps; the girl didn't have to wait, he was so full of his perplexity.

"It's about Miss Chisers," he began.

"You see, I want to take her to the theatre to-morrow, and she says she won't go—says she hasn't anything to wear. Well, you see, that brings me up standing. For about five minutes I couldn't see through the fog at all; then I thought of you. I was sure you were the clever kind that could fix things up. What is it she wants? Something fluffy, or lacy? You can help her out, can't you?"

The girl was looking at him in undisguised amazement.

"Take Miss Chisers to the theatre," she repeated, "*Miss Chisers!* And you want me to help!"

The Boy nodded.

"That's the size of it. I want help mighty bad and it looks as if you're the rescuer."

The girl's wrath was rising.

"I must say," she remarked, "that you are a cool one. What do you want me to do—make her a party-gown or lend her one of mine?"

The Boy faced about upon her with a look she never had seen in his face before.

"See here," he said. "It's got to be honest—because you want to do it. I thought you'd understand. I couldn't ask any of the others—the way they'd do it, she'd die rather than take it from them, and I wouldn't blame her. But, well—I knew how a girl I know at home would manage things and I thought you could, too. She—that girl—would make her *want* to go."

There was silence for a moment.

Then Annette spoke abruptly.

"Have you got her picture?"

"Hers?" the Boy repeated, perplexed.

"That girl's."

"Yes," he acknowledged, reluctantly.

"I'd like to see it some day. You needn't be afraid—I won't eat it! And I'll stand by you. I won't promise anything because it's a whole lot harder than you think, but I'll try my best. This is Mame Conover's here."

The Boy stood, his hat lifted, the light of one of the street-lamps on his eager face.

"Say, that's *bully*," he cried joyously. "I knew you'd do it. And I'm going to bring her some flowers. Do you think she'd like violets best?"

"Yes," the girl nodded; "yes, buy violets."

Then the door opened and she disappeared.

The Boy, coming home the next evening with his violets, met Annette in the hall.

"Is it all right?" he asked.

She looked at him with a curious smile.

"You bet it is," she responded.

"You're a dandy!" he cried enthusiastically. "I knew you could fix it up. If you ever get in a tight place, count on yours to command—*sure*."

The girl looked at him through narrowed eyes, the curious half-mocking smile still curving her lips.

"Want to know how I did it?" she asked. "I lied to her—that was how."

"You—"

The Boy looked at her startled.

She nodded a trifle maliciously.

"You thought it was a nice easy little thing you were asking, didn't you—something any fool could do. 'Miss Chisers, allow me to deck you out for your blow-out to-night?' See her consenting, don't you? She'd have turned me into the street—pretty nearly did anyhow when I said I couldn't pay last week's board."

The Boy's hand moved involuntarily towards his pocket, forgetting that there was less than a dollar there. The girl laughed, suddenly good humored again.

"Aint you easy?" she mocked. "That was my fairy story—took me a whole hour last night to work it out, but that wasn't in it compared with making her catch on this morning. I had to fairly prod her into it, inch by inch. When she finally brought out that old lace from the dark ages, to let me work out my board bill, I thought I'd die. I don't know after all when I've had such a lark. Wait till you see that waist; I'm thinking of going into partnership with Madame Le Grand, I am."

"Look here," the Boy said masterfully, "how long did it take—fixing it up, you know?"

"Me diamond-studded thirty-carat gold watch is at the jeweler's being repaired," she retorted, impudently.

The Boy shook his head impatiently. "Quit that!" he commanded. "What I want to know is, how you happened to be at home to-day?"

"Oh, didn't I tell you? It was the nick of luck. Stedman's & Stedman's mother-in-law died last night and the office was closed."

His eyes studied her searchingly; hers met his, wide and clear, with a flicker of saucy laughter in them. He didn't believe her, and she knew that he didn't, but the wide innocence of her gaze would have made it an insult for him to say so. In a moment the silent duel was over.

"Well, all I can say is—you're a brick, and I sha'n't ever forget it," he declared gravely.

She waved him away lightly.

"Say, you aint setting up for Sherlock Holmes, are you?" she jeered. "Taking you a whole month to discover a dead easy proposition like that! There, go along or the stiffening will be out of those violets before you get them to her. 'Ta-ta!'"

And with a flirt and a whisk of cheap, ruffled skirts, she was past him and up stairs. But in the upper hall she stopped softly and looked back. In her sharp eyes for a moment was the brooding mother-tenderness of the old Madonnas.

The Boy went on with her to Miss Chisers' room. He had to knock three times before the door was opened, and Miss Chisers stood there, not with the



"And they call this thing *life!*" she said bitterly

lace waist yet, but with something so changed that he stared in bewilderment, his masculine comprehension not grasping the fact that it was the difference in her hair. Or perhaps, after all, it was more than that. Come to think of it, even fluffy hair does not always soften the eyes and take grim curves out of the lips and call an unknown flush to worn cheeks. He pulled himself together in a second and presented his offering.

"The compliments of Miss Ames," he said, "and she is more than honored that you are to be there to-night, and promises to do her prettiest."

"For *me!*" Miss Chisers gasped.

She had not heard the nonsense at all, so overwhelming had been the soft cool touch of the petals—the delicate breath of their fragrance.

"For nobody else," he assured her.

She looked up then, but though her

eyes were upon his face it seemed to him as if she were looking infinitely beyond him, far down the dim gray years, and at the sound of her voice something caught at his throat.

"I never had any flowers given me in my life before," she said.

But he only laughed gay assurance.

"They've begun to come now—they'll keep on, you see if they don't. Carriage at the door at 7:45 sharp, Miss Chisers."

After all, how little he could know—the Boy. He knew that she had not come to the dining-room, though he sat on the radiator whistling, till half-past seven; he could not guess that, in the food he was offering her famished soul, she forgot her body entirely. He could not imagine the tremulous ecstasy with which she felt the touch of the lace at her throat, nor the great, incredible wonder of the violets.

When joking merrily over their carriage, as he helped her into the car, he could not guess—how could he?—that jammed in with the brightly gowned theatre crowd, she was saying to herself, "I am going as much as these. It's mine to-night—*mine*."

But at the theatre itself, when he saw her face at the close of the first act, he leaned back and left her alone, realizing, boy though he was, that she had entered into a land where he could not follow.

The bright enchanted hours slipped swiftly by. The Boy forgot Margaret Ames and her magic country; looking at the absorbed face beside him he was making calculations. To think of never having had this in one's life—*never in one's life!* And he, worse luck, could do so little. It would mean a narrow contrivance to get through the month, and after that came Christmas, and Jessie—

He was aroused by the stir about him, and realized that the curtain had fallen and everybody was rising. Miss Chisers had risen, too, but she had not spoken. Silently he guided her through the throng and down the stairs. The cars were crowded again so that, though he found her a seat, he was wedged in the aisle and there was no opportunity to talk had either wanted to. It was only when they had reached her own steps that she

spoke at last. "I never shall forget it all my life—never! I feel as if I could stand anything now."

"We're going to do it again," he said promptly. "Got your key, Miss Chisers?"

She handed him the key; he threw open the door and then looked at her smiling.

"Do city folks lock up nights? I have a sort of idea they do."

"Yes," she nodded, "they do, but I'd rather do it myself, thank you. I'm used to it."

"All right," he agreed, "if there isn't anything—"

"Not a thing," she repeated.

With a gay good-night he disappeared up the stairs. Miss Chisers went into the parlor to turn out the gas—some one had left it flaring brightly. Usually the waste would have fretted her, but nothing could touch her joy to-night. She was stretching up to reach the high central chandelier when the sound of a latch-key startled her, and she turned to meet Mr. Wentworth's amazed gaze.

"Why, Miss Chisers," he exclaimed, "I didn't recognize you for a second."

Miss Chisers looked at him happily; there was neither constraint nor hesitation in her manner—for the first time in her life she was simply a happy woman.

"I've just come in," she replied, reaching again to the gas. "Isn't it a beautiful night?"

But Mr. Wentworth was beside her. "Allow *me*, Miss Chisers," he said stiffly.

Miss Chisers, bewildered, dropped her hand, her breath coming quickly. There was no doubt about it, his stiff punctilious courtesy assured her of it—he was treating her, not like a boarding-house keeper, but like a *lady*.

Up in her own room she opened the window and looked up to the splendid autumn stars; from above came a few blithely whistled notes, checked abruptly, as if with sudden memory of a sleeping house. Miss Chisers smiled tenderly.

They were young—the Boy and the girl with the sweet fearless mouth, but was not she too alive, *alive!*

Chaperoning Hilda

BY HELEN BAGG

Author of "As Told by the Umbrella," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CH. WEBER-DITZLER

IT was shortly after Isabel Tilbury and I had won the reluctant consent of her father to our engagement, that she and her sister, Edith, went to London to visit Mrs. Bronson Crane, an expatriated American and distant relative of the Tilbury family. I have always suspected Senator Tilbury of having arranged the trip with a view to nipping our attachment in the bud, or at least of concealing it till after the anxious period which preceded his reflection. Not that he had any personal objection to me, but, as Isabel tactfully put it, it was rather embarrassing, when you had put yourself on record as a friend of the people and vigorous opposer of trust interests, to have your daughter insist upon marrying the son of the very trust magnate whom you were trying to pulverize. At any rate, whatever his motives may have been, Isabel and Edith were packed off to Mrs. Bronson Crane, while I, in accordance with Father's idea that it was time for me to cultivate an understanding of business principles, and that this understanding might be acquired much more conveniently beneath the roof of the stranger than under his own, entered the employment of Messrs. Jenkins & Morse, manufacturers of the "Superba Fountain Pen." Messrs. Jenkins & Morse, after sifting me carefully, concluded that the only valuable business asset which I possessed, apart from the family name, was a smattering of languages which I had picked up during several trips on the continent, and sent me abroad on business to their foreign agents.

I had spent some weeks in Germany and Switzerland, and was returning to London, by way of Paris, where I had a business appointment. Everything had gone smoothly and I was looking forward to a fortnight with Isabel in Lon-

don. I was alone in the compartment, and was congratulating myself upon the fact, when the train stopped at a station, some one opened the door, and thrust in a square, black, wooden box, then a very bewildering combination of pale blue broadcloth, white chiffon, ostrich plumes and fluffy blonde hair, which proved to be a young woman. Next appeared a man, who did not enter the compartment, but put his head in at the door, and poured forth a flood of excited French, addressed, to my surprise and consternation, to me. He was a small man, very mild looking, I imagine, when in a natural condition, but wrought up to a state of frenzy by his errand.

"*Monsieur* is American?" he began. "I was sure of it. I have to ask of your politeness a favor. This young woman is from Croatia, a place where they speak no English, no French, only a vile *patois*! She will go to Paris, where some one will meet her. If I may beg *monsieur* to see that she does not get out of the train until she arrives there? She knows nothing—absolutely nothing," here the young man's voice rose to an indignant shriek, "of railroad-trains: a little animal, in fact."

He paused and mopped his forehead wildly; then, as the guard approached, he thrust an envelope and some pieces of money hurriedly into the girl's hand, exclaiming with dramatic emphasis, and in decidedly primitive German:

"Your ticket, *mademoiselle*; do not lose it! Within is also the letter; do not lose it! Here are twenty-five francs to buy food on the journey; do not lose them! And for the love of Heaven, do not leave the train till you arrive in Paris!"

And with this he vanished.

Whether the girl understood him or

not, I could not tell, but she clutched the envelope and the money tightly, and turned her eyes on me in a bland and highly interested stare. The train started and, as it did so, the Frenchman's head appeared once more at the door.

"The name of *mademoiselle* is Schmidt!" he screamed, and disappeared again as the train pulled out of the station.

"Schmidt—Hilda Schmidt," repeated a soft, pleasant voice, as I fell back into my seat.

"*Mademoiselle*," I began—with a faint misgiving as to whether I ought to have said "*Fräulein*;" but how was I to know how young ladies are addressed in Croatia?—"Mademoiselle has friends in Paris?"

My German is pretty poor, but it seemed to me that if she could understand the Frenchman's, she ought to be able to make something out of mine. Evidently she did, for she replied with a smile and a shake of the head. Then she handed me the envelope.

"Do you want me to read it?" I asked
 "Ja, Ja!" with another smile.

The letter, which was in German, recommended Hilda Schmidt, of the town of Sisek, Croatia, to the care of one Schultz, of the Austrian Embassy, Paris. The said Schultz was to see her safely started on the way to London, where her father would meet her. It also mentioned that the girl had been a servant in the house of the writer, who, judging from the long and unpronounceable title which accompanied his signature, must have been a person of consequence. In the envelope was also a highly complimentary character or reference, by means of which *Fräulein* Schmidt evidently intended to gain a position in London.

I looked at the girl again. Hers was an innocent, childlike prettiness, pleasant to look at, and of the sort which might have furnished a model for all the blonde dolls that ever hailed from the Fatherland. But what amazed me was her clothes. It is a prevailing impression that men know nothing about women's dress, but even a man may be trusted to know the difference between the clothes worn by the ordinary domestic, and those

which come from the delightful little shops in the Rue de la Paix, and, unless I was very much mistaken, they were the ones which had had the fashioning of the dainty garments worn by my new acquaintance. And a most remarkable traveling costume they produced. The wide brimmed hat, with its nodding plumes, the blue cloth suit, which fitted the pretty figure of its wearer admirably, the long black gloves and the high heeled shoes: she was a figure for the Bois, rather than the train. I wondered what she would look like when she arrived in London.

I handed back the letter and advised the girl, in Heaven knows what mongrel German, to put it and the money away for safe keeping; whereupon she insisted upon handing them both to me to keep for her. I went attempt to give a literal translation of our conversation. I couldn't if I wanted to. It consisted so largely of nods, shakes of the head, pantomime of different sorts, and occasional references to the conversation-book in my pocket, which, after the manner of conversation-books, proved to be a veritable mine of superfluous information, and remarkably free from any that was at all useful.

As nearly as I could make out from this exciting method of conversation, *Fräulein* Schmidt was going to London to join her father. He had sent her the money for her ticket, and, with the childlike faith of the emigrant, she had started out to cross Europe with the small sum which remained after buying the ticket. Her employer, he of the unpronounceable title, had written letters for her to friends at the different consulates, and she had been forwarded like a bale of hay. At Berne, she had fallen into the hands of Monsieur Alphonse Duval, the excitable little Frenchman, who had taken her home and turned her over to his wife, who had amused herself by dressing the girl in some of her cast off garments. Here *Fräulein* insisted upon opening the black box which, judging from a hurried glance at its interior, fulfilled the double purpose of a trunk and a larder, and showing me the brown calico gown and plain sailor hat which she had worn at the beginning.



"Do you want me to read it?"

"The gracious lady did not like my clothes," she explained, naïvely, "so she made me take them off and gave me these splendid ones. The gracious lady had a room full of beautiful clothes. Also she curled my hair and gave me many things to eat."

It was the sort of story to give one a pleasant feeling toward one's fellow creatures. To think of the girl—she couldn't have been a day over eighteen—being passed along, from one hand to another, from Sisek to Paris, receiving nothing but kindness all the way: it made

me feel a sort of responsibility to see that it ended safely.

We did not talk very much during the rest of the trip. The young lady appeared to be sleepy, and I admit that a prolonged dialogue in German, two-thirds of which has to be accomplished in the sign-language, is not to my taste. It was five o'clock in the afternoon when we reached Paris. I found a porter to take the objectionable black box, and we began to look about for Mr. Schultz of the Austrian Embassy. There were tall men, short men, thin men, fat men, men

who looked as if they might be Austrian, and men who were unmistakably German or French, but there was no one who seemed to be searching for a lone young person from Croatia with a black wooden box. It did not at once strike me that even if Schultz was there, Hilda, in her borrowed plumes, would not be exactly the sort of young person he would be looking for. The clamor of half a dozen anxious cabdrivers who had surrounded us, as vultures surround their prey, became so unbearable that I proposed taking a carriage to the Embassy and settling the matter that way.

Arrived at the Embassy, I took the precaution of leaving the box in the carriage while we went in. I wanted to break things gently to Schultz. The thought that he might possibly decline to fill his part of the contract had just occurred to me and filled me with dismay. But there was worse luck than that in store for me. Upon inquiring for Mr. Schultz, we were shown into a small reception-room, where a sedate young man came to us presently, and informed us that Mr. Schultz was out of town.

"Out of town!" I exclaimed. "Impossible! Why, he was to meet this young lady and see her started for London."

The young man regretted to give me such unwelcome information, but Mr. Schultz was most certainly out of town, and would not be back for a week. Also, he began to show unmistakable signs of being in a hurry and desiring to get rid of us. In desperation, I showed him the letter and tried to explain the situation. The young man read the letter, surveyed Hilda coldly, settled it, probably, in his own mind, that never yet had servant-girl appeared in garments like unto hers, and regretted that he could do nothing for us. In fact, his manner verged so closely on the suspicious that I concluded any time spent in trying to convince him of our respectability would be time wasted; so I took Hilda, who had understood next to nothing of our conversation, but had amused herself by staring admiringly at the young man, back to the carriage, and told the man to drive to the Hotel de Normandie.

On the way I tried to explain to her what had happened and what a very em-

barrassing position Mr. Schultz had put us in by not being in the place where he was supposed to be. Then, when I succeeded in impressing upon her the extreme peril of her situation, she burst into tears, which so disconcerted me that I spent the rest of the time assuring her that everything was all right, and that I would see that she got to London safely, Schultz or no Schultz.

Once at the hotel, Hilda and her black box were bestowed in a comfortable room, with orders to serve her meals to her there. I had to take the *portier* into my confidence on the subject, and he, with the natural tact of Frenchmen, assured me that he understood perfectly, and that the young lady would be looked after most comfortably. After which, I strolled down to the Ritz to meet the man with whom I had the business-appointment, a certain M. de St. Andre.

I awoke next morning with a sense of comfort. The dinner at the Ritz had been a very pleasant one, and M. de St. Andre and I had spent the remainder of the evening at the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt. I reflected that I would be rid of my charge in a few hours, and in a few more, Isabel and I would be sitting together in Mrs. Bronson Crane's drawing-room. I went down to breakfast, wondering how Fräulein Schmidt had spent the night. The *portier* stopped me as I was about to enter the dining-room.

"A thousand pardons, *monsieur*, but the young lady desires to see you. She seems to be ill. Marie cannot understand what she says, but she has wept a great deal."

Ill! My blood ran cold as the man spoke. I followed him to the lift and we went up-stairs together. He knocked at a door and a woman's voice bade us enter. We went in and found Hilda seated on the floor, her face wet with tears, and her head resting on the shoulder of the sympathetic chambermaid. She gave a cry of relief at the sight of me, and the chambermaid and the *portier* exchanged looks which made me nervous.

"What's the matter?" I demanded.

"I think it is a tooth, *monsieur*," volunteered the chambermaid, solicitously. "See, the poor angel's cheek is swollen."

Hilda stopped weeping long enough to

exhibit one side of her face, which was certainly rounder than the other.

"If *monsieur* will permit, there is a most excellent dentist who resides not five doors from the hotel," said the *portier*, eagerly. "If *mademoiselle* could be persuaded to go to him—"

"She'll have to go to him," I said, sharply. "Has she had her breakfast?"

The chambermaid pointed to a tray of dishes on the table.

I turned to Hilda and said in my best Croatian-German:

"If you'll get your hat on while I get a cup of coffee, we'll go around and look up the dentist. Afterward, we'll start for London. Do you understand?"

She said she did, so I left her in the care of the chambermaid, while I drank my coffee, cursed Schultz, and hoped they'd never get hold of this story at home.

The dentist, a polite little man, examined the tooth, tapped and prodded it, much to the anguish of the victim, who wept in the most heart-rending manner during the entire visit, and finally announced that he couldn't do anything to it till the swelling went down. In the meantime, he would poultice it, and we had better come in again toward evening.

"Toward evening!" I gasped. "Why, we'll be in London by that time."

The little man was horrified. Travel on the water with a tooth in that condition! What was *monsieur* thinking of? Did he want "*madame*" to catch cold and suffer still more? Only wait another twenty-four hours and "*madame*" would surely be better. All this with a look which conveyed quite plainly the fact that the little man considered me an unfeeling brute.

Here was a pleasant situation! It was of no use to consult Hilda, who was weeping convulsively and saying things in her native tongue about the poultice that sounded rather strong. Nor would it profit us to explain matters to the dentist, who, like the *portier* and the chambermaid, was French, and bound by all traditions to receive such explanations with a grain of salt.

I put on my hat, told Hilda to come along, and informed the dentist that we would return toward evening. Then the

question arose of what to do with Hilda till then. She was a forlorn looking specimen, and having known myself what it was to have a toothache, I thought that to shut her up all day in a room with nothing to do, would be nothing short of cruel.

So I explained the situation to her and asked if she would like to go for a drive in the country.

She wiped away her tears and answered, "*Ja*," in a tone the meekness of which went down to my heart.

I hunted up a garage and we took an automobile trip to Versailles.

Hilda, who had never been in a motor before, was enchanted. She forgot the poultice, she forgot the tooth; she fell an easy and delighted victim to the charms of the monster.

We returned about five o'clock, the tooth better, Hilda much cheered, and I completely worn out. Chattering mongrel German all day to amuse a person who relapses into toothache the moment her mind is released may appeal to some; it was too much like the old fashioned pursuit of "minding the baby," to attract me. I was much relieved when the dentist told me that the next day "*madame*" might without fear cross the Channel. In the meantime, he took the filling out of the tooth, a proceeding which necessitated my holding "*madame*" in the chair by main force, and promising her everything from chocolates to an evening at the theatre.

This ordeal over, we returned to the hotel, where I again had Hilda's dinner sent to her room. I think she would have preferred dining with me, but on that question I was adamant; though I atoned for my hardness by taking her afterward to a music-hall. It was the music-hall, by the way, which was to prove my undoing. I went there not at all in the sort of spirit in which one usually approaches those festive spots. I was tired—tired of Hilda, tired of myself, tired of trying to butcher the German language, and I felt that in a very few moments I was going to be tired of the music-hall.

As for the music-hall, it was quite the usual sort of thing. The same people doing the same things in the very same way. But, like the motor, it was new and glor-

ious to my companion. Her eyes shone and her feet kept time to the music; and when a photographer appeared and proceeded to photograph the scene by flashlight, her delight knew no bounds. The evening was about half over, when a hand was placed on my shoulder, and, turning, I saw Charlie Allison.

Charlie Allison has been dancing attendance upon Edith Tilbury for the past two years, and the private opinion of the family is that she will take him some day, if she doesn't find somebody more to her taste in the meantime. He trots about after her wherever she goes, so that I needn't have been surprised to meet him this side of the Atlantic; but I was surprised, and rather disgusted—especially as I saw his eye light on *Fräulein Schmidt* with very much the same expression that had lit up the eyes of the *portier* and the chambermaid at the *Hôtel de Normandie*.

"Hello, old fellow," said he, "who'd have thought of seeing you here!"

Then he glanced inquiringly at Hilda. Charlie has the tact of an elephant.

"Oh, I don't know," I said, affecting a careless attitude. "You seem to be here. Nothing the matter with the place, is there?"

Charlie looked a bit taken back.

"Oh, of course not!" he stammered. "I'm here with some Harvard chaps. I'm crossing the Channel in the morning."

"I'm going sometime to-morrow myself," I said.

Then, with a glance at Hilda, who was staring at us interestedly, "Sorry I can't introduce you, but the young lady doesn't speak English."

"Oh, I don't mind trying a little French," replied Charlie, readily. "Good practice, don't you know?"

"She doesn't speak French, either," I answered. "There's a long and interesting story connected with her, Charlie; I'll tell it to you sometime, when you're a member of the family."

This was twitting Charlie on a tender subject, as he is a bit touchy in regard to his indefinite love-affair. However, he is nothing if not good-natured, so with a wink that he meant to be knowing, but which only succeeded in being vague, he said:

"Oh, don't bother. I'm with some chaps so I won't detain you."

"Good-by," I said, "see you at Mrs. Bronson Crane's in a day or two."

"No, you won't," was the reply. "I'm goin' down to Mrs. Westfall's place in the country to a house-party. Good-by."

I was glad that he was not going at once to London. Not that I feared that my adventure would reach Isabel's ears; for I intended to tell her myself. But, somehow, I felt that the story needed a more tactful presentation than Charlie was capable of giving it.

The following morning we paid our last visit to the dentist, and then, to my great relief, shook the dust of Paris off our feet.

We had a good crossing, arrived in London about seven in the evening, and drove immediately to the address which Hilda's father had sent her. It was a lodging house on the East Side, but in a very decent neighborhood, and, happily, the paternal Schmidt had returned from work and was there to greet his daughter. Up to that moment, I had not felt sure that the paternal Schmidt really existed, or that, granting his reality, he wouldn't vanish into space as Schultz had done, leaving me to roam about London encumbered with his troublesome offspring. I left them in the midst of exclamations and explanations, and, with a sigh of relief told the cabby to drive to my hotel.

I found in my rooms a note from Isabel, dated two or three days previous, telling me that she and Edith had gone down into the country to spend a few days with Mrs. Westfall, and that I mustn't think of leaving London until their return.

"I didn't want to go," added the inevitable postscript, "but Edith was determined and I really couldn't get out of it."

I felt a bit out of temper with Isabel after having read her note.

It's all very well to indulge a younger sister, but Isabel positively spoils Edith Tilbury, and Edith, who has a turn for domineering and has had considerable practice on Charlie Allison, takes advantage of her good nature. At the thought of Charlie, a peculiar feeling came over me. Charlie had said that he

was bound for the Westfall house-party. Of course he wouldn't—there wasn't any chance of—but the thought was too disagreeable and I put it out of my mind.

The week of Isabel's absence passed rather dully for me, but it *did pass* at last; and the day of her return found me at Mrs. Bronson Crane's with the feeling that my patience deserved a reward.

I was shown into the drawing-room, where I expected to find Isabel alone. Instead of that Edith and Charlie were with her. I knew the moment that I saw them that something was the matter.

Edith sat near the window with her hat on, and Charlie stood in front of the fireplace fidgeting. Isabel, who was sitting by the tea-table, rose to greet me. I didn't expect an impassioned welcome with the others in the room, but I was hardly prepared for Isabel's frigidity. Involuntarily, I glanced at Charlie, and the eye of the *inamorata* being removed from him for a moment, received a wink of such diabolical meaning that my blood chilled. We each made a perfunctory remark or two about the weather and I sat down.

"Have a good crossing?" inquired Charlie, solicitously.

"Very," I replied. "Did you have a pleasant time at the Westfalls?"

"Delightful." This from Edith. "Mrs. Westfall knows so many charming people."

"Yes," I said. "That's the essence of a good time—good company."

"So I imagine," said Isabel, coldly. "Which explains, no doubt, why you had such a good time in Paris."

This was coming to the point with a vengeance.

"I? I didn't know that I had mentioned having a good time in Paris. As a matter of fact, I had a pretty disagreeable one."

Then, unfortunately, I laughed. I couldn't help it; they looked so exactly as you've seen three cats, one inquisitive Tom and two demure Tabbies, watching a mouse-hole and waiting to pounce on the mouse the moment it shows its head.

"There's nothing to laugh at!" exclaimed Isabel, in a hard tone. "If you've been behaving horridly and deceiving me, it's not funny, is it?"

My heart smote me. "My darling girl," I said, "I wouldn't deceive you in the smallest degree for the privilege of being made president of Jenkins, Morse & Co."

"If you wont take the things that I say seriously, perhaps you'll pay some attention to what I do. Take it—I—I don't want to wear it any more."

And the dear girl took the ring I had given her from her finger and handed it to me.

"Of course I wont take it seriously. You wont, yourself, when you hear how it happened. I suppose Charlie—"

"He didn't say a word till I made him! He didn't need to, when your abominable conduct is blazoned in the newspapers."

The newspapers! This was coming it pretty strong. I stared at Isabel in amazement.

Charlie, with the gravity befitting the situation, picked up a copy of an illustrated paper and handed it to me.

It was opened at a double page illustration, a photograph of a popular Parisian music-hall, taken during a performance, and in the center of the thing, fiendishly clear and recognizable, I saw my own face and that of Fräulein Schmidt. In another place I saw Charlie's cherubic countenance, surrounded by the Harvard chaps. For that sort of a picture it was horribly clear.

"Where did you get the thing?" I gasped.

"It fell into my hands at the Westfalls," said Edith, severely. "I showed it to Charles and insisted upon his explaining. Then he broke it to Isabel. I should think you'd be ashamed to go to such a place," she added, indignantly.

"Charles doesn't seem to be," I replied.

"That was different. He went with men. You—"

"I went with a young woman who fell into my hands through a misfortune. She—"

"Oh, I dare say she didn't consider it a misfortune," replied Edith, rising. "I will say this much for you, Horace, that I think it much more probable that you fell into hers. Come, Charles, it's time we started if we are going to Lady Sara's this afternoon."



"What in the world are you doing?"

Charlie rose and started to follow her, giving me a sympathetic glance as he passed.

"Do you mean to say that you're not going to listen to my explanation?" I said, indignantly.

"We haven't time," replied my sister-in-law-elect, with great suavity.

"But, I tell you, she's a perfectly respectable girl!" I protested. "She came over with me from Paris to meet her father, and—"

But Edith had sailed out of the room, Charlie following meekly.

I turned to Isabel, who burst into tears the moment they were gone.

I felt like a monster. I plunged wildly into explanations, beginning with Hilda's

entrance to the train, and ending with her restoration to her family.

Isabel sat with her head buried in the sofa-cushions, so that I couldn't see her face, but I felt that I must be convincing her. I had never been so eloquent since the night I had approached the Senator on the subject of our engagement.

So I was a little taken back, when, at the end of my remarks, she raised her head, looked me straight in the eye, and said, shortly:

"I don't believe a word of it!"

"But, my dearest girl, I—"

"Oh, how can you talk to me like that, when you know what you've been doing? Look at that woman's face, look at her clothes! Does she look like a servant?

You know she doesn't. I've heard of the creatures who go to those places and talk to men they don't know—"

"My dear Isabel, I give you my word that I've told you the truth about this affair. I know it looks queer, but it's true. I couldn't help it; somebody had to look after her."

"Look after her! You needn't have taken her to that place."

"Where would you have had me take her? To the Comédie Française—a girl like that?"

"You could have shut her up in her room."

"With a raging toothache? You are not humane."

"Well, I'm truthful, at any rate; so there's no use my telling you that I'll overlook it when I can't, and won't!"

And Isabel rose and walked to the window.

I took up my hat.

"If you believed me there wouldn't be anything to overlook," I said, stiffly. "As you don't, the best thing for me to do is go."

There was a sound from the window which might have been either a cough or a sob. I chose to interpret it as the latter, and took a step toward her.

"Isabel, you aren't going to let this silly business come between us?" I said.

"Silly! If you call tearing all over the continent with a woman like that—taking her to hotels and dentists and music-halls and all that sort of thing—silly, I wonder what you call really bad! Suppose I had done something like that with—well—with Charlie Allison, wouldn't you have let it come between us?"

"No, I wouldn't. I'd use a little common-sense and realize that any girl who really cared for me, couldn't care for Charlie Allison, no matter how queer the thing looked. As I've told you once, the girl was nothing but a poor little slavey, as they say over here—"

"Slavey! With those clothes?" said Isabel, going back to the beginning with that persistence which is so exasperating, and so thoroughly feminine.

"I'm going, Isabel," I said. I felt like the hero of a society novel. "When you've made up your mind to be sensible

and believe what I say, you can send for me."

She didn't answer. She was standing by the window, with her face hidden in the curtains.

I left the room. In the novel, you know, the girl usually relents when he leaves the room, and cries "Paul!" or whatever the duffer's name happens to be; but he, not hearing, goes away in despair. I didn't intend to take any chances, so I waited outside a few moments, so that if Isabel should cry "Horace!" I would be on hand to profit by it; but she didn't, so I went out.

Of course the first thing I did was to hail a cab and drive immediately to the address where I had left Fräulein Schmidt, a week ago. It was all very well to talk about the engagement's being over, but I didn't intend that it should be if I could help it. I would produce Hilda Schmidt at Mrs. Bronson Crane's, cost what it might, and they should see for themselves the material out of which they had concocted a Paris grisette.

Arrived at the lodgings of the paternal Schmidt, what was my horror to find them vacant and the neighbors ignorant of the whereabouts of the late tenants! The stout Irish woman who kept the lodgings was quite sympathetic, especially when I gave her half a crown by way of refreshing her memory, but, unfortunately, it was information, not sympathy that I needed.

"They was rale quare folks, thim Schmidts," she said. "They did be gone in a hurry, wid niver a wurrud to anybody of where they'd be goin'. But it was th' divil of a language they were afther spakin', so it's no wonder they didn't say much. I think the young woman wint out to sarvice."

Then as I looked disappointed, she added, in a motherly tone:

"But don't ye be discouraged, sir, yer too good lookin' a bye to be wantin' a swateheart long."

I thanked her in considerable embarrassment, and fled to the cab.

If I had spent a dull week while Isabel was out of town, I spent a wretched one now that she was returned.

Unable to produce Hilda, who seemed

to have vanished into space, I would not go near Mrs. Bronson Crane's, or, indeed, to any other house where there was a chance of meeting Isabel. My pride had begun to assert itself. I reasoned that she had behaved very badly to me; first, in suspecting me of a vulgar intrigue; secondly, in doubting my word. Some day she should know the truth, and be properly humiliated by it; till then, let her suffer!

Unfortunately, I seemed to be doing most of the suffering. Isabel went everywhere, and appeared to be enjoying herself hugely, while I haunted hotels, clubs, and theatres and wished myself anywhere but where I was. Finally, having exhausted everything else, I determined to do the "sights." I hadn't done them since, at the age of sixteen, I piloted Mother and Aunt about Europe.

I am convinced that the tourist is the man who gets the most enjoyment out of Europe, anyhow. The people to whom a trip abroad means social festivities, and hobnobbing with royalty, don't begin to enjoy themselves as do those happy souls who rummage the subterranean mysteries of the Tower, or climb perseveringly the steps that lead to the gargoyles of Notre Dame. I wouldn't give the thrill that caught me between the shoulders when I saw the spot on which Mary Stuart was executed, for the privilege of shaking hands with any ordinary, every day, frock-coated king that you could introduce me to.

I began on Westminster Abbey. I "did" it thoroughly, Baedeker in hand, after the manner of all good Americans. When I had finished, I "did" Windsor Castle, and Hampden Court, and all other show-places, and I was uniformly miserable in all of them. Then I fell back on the Tower, and even that failed to interest me. I followed a fat and pompous "beefeater" over some miles of stone pavement and through some dozens of cells and torture-chambers, and listened to his recital of horrors in a state of mind totally unmoved.

"This 'ere room, sir, is the one that Sir Walter Raleigh was confined hin; the winders 'aving been put hin since 'is time. The lawst h'American I showed

this 'ere room to, was a young woman, sir, who harsked me to lock 'er hin, so as she could see 'ow Sir Walter felt. You're an hodd people, sir, ver hodd."

I tipped him and found my way out alone, leaving him to think us "hodder" than ever, probably.

I had dismissed my cab and was walking up Piccadilly, when I heard my name called, and looking about, saw Lady Sara Bromley leaning out of her motor. I responded with alacrity. Lady Sara is a particular friend of Isabel's. She gave me a funny little look as I approached, and pointed to the Baedeker.

"What in the world are you doing with that?" she demanded.

"I've been going through the Tower," I explained. "It's always the thing to take along when you go there, isn't it?"

"Going through the Tower!"

Lady Sara looked at me in wonder.

"Yes, I'm sightseeing," I said, as she continued to stare at me with the same expression.

"Have you had enough for to-day?"

"Quite."

"Then please get in and ride a little way with me. I want to talk to you."

I got in and she murmured a direction to the chauffeur, who started the car.

Then she turned to me again. She has very wonderful eyes, has Lady Sara; they are deep blue, and there is usually a twinkle of amusement lurking in their depths. Just now it was dancing quite openly. The owner of the eyes evidently regarded me in the light of a joke gotten up for her particular benefit.

"It is so odd to think of you in business," she remarked, irrelevantly, as we started off.

"I don't see why. Most of my countrymen do go into business, you know."

"Yes, of course; but one always thought of you as a sort of lily of the field, don't you know? It is rather a shock to think of a lily peddling fountain-pens, now, isn't it?"

"Not more so than to hear of a butterfly getting fancy prices for eggs and milk," I retaliated.

Her ladyship has a model dairy down at her country place, with which she does a thriving business.



"Which explains why you had such a good time in Paris"

"They're not fancy prices when you consider the excellence of the articles," was the prompt reply. "Besides, I've always had a business-head. It's a gift, you know, like writing poetry; we never supposed you had it."

"You see your mistake now, I hope?"

"Oh, dear, yes. Isabel says you've done famously. Were you supplying the soldiers in the Tower with pens? They would be awfully handy on the field of battle."

"That's a good idea; I'll remember it if I go there again. This time I was there purely for my own amusement."

"My dear Mr. Parker, what is the matter between you and Isabel Tilbury? Oh, you needn't be surprised that I've noticed. When a man refuses every invitation for fear that he may happen to meet the girl he's engaged to, and spends his time mooning about the Tower and Westminster Abbey with a Baedeker under his arm, it doesn't take a very brilliant person to know something's wrong."

"Westminster Abbey—"

"Yes, we saw you going there the other day. Isabel and I were going to take tea on the Terrace. I asked her what was the matter with you, and she grew quite angry and wouldn't discuss the subject."

"I'm glad she has the grace to be ashamed," I said. "It's all her fault."

"Of course I'm not curious," continued her ladyship, persuasively, "and I never believe in mixing one's self up in other people's love-affairs, but if I can be of any assistance—"

"Oh, I'm quite willing you should know!" I exclaimed, and, lured by her sympathetic look, I poured out the story of my unfortunate adventure.

Lady Sara made an effort to maintain the sympathetic look, but the combination of *Fräulein Schmidt*, the *portier*, the chambermaid, and the tooth, was too much for her. She laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks.

"I'm glad you think it's funny," I said, gloomily, "nobody else seems to."

Lady Sara wiped her eyes, then went off in another paroxysm.

"Of course, if you're going to laugh—"

"My dear boy, not for the world! You say the girl has disappeared?"

"Vanished completely, and her father with her," I replied.

"That's unfortunate, certainly. We must try to make Isabel listen to reason. You don't go there any more?"

"When she thinks me a liar, and says so? Hardly."

"No, of course not. You couldn't, under the circumstances; but you can come to see me. Suppose we say Wednesday—at five o'clock?"

"You are going to ask Isabel?"

"Possibly; I don't know yet, but I want you. Promise you'll come."

"Oh, I'll come with pleasure, Lady Sara; but I warn you, that if Isabel comes in her present state of mind, it will be about as cheerful as a funeral. You'd better ask a lot of other people to take the chill off."

"I'll attend to that, so don't worry. I'm going to put you down here, as I've an engagement with my milliner. Don't forget to come Wednesday."

I thought, as I mounted the steps of Lady Sara's house on Wednesday at five, that that clever person had for once undertaken more than she could perform. I thought so again, when I entered the drawing-room and saw Isabel, who was pouring tea and talking to an elderly gentleman.

A chilly look settled down on her face as she bowed to me. She looked a bit pale, too, I thought, and as if she hadn't found much more pleasure in her round of gayeties than I had in my Cook's tours. Edith and Charlie were there, too, and several others.

Lady Sara piloted me up to Isabel.

"Give him some tea, Isabel," she said.

"I think he needs looking after. I found him moping about the Tower the other day."

Isabel poured me a cup of tea sweetened with two lumps of sugar—she knows that I never take sugar—and said, with an evident effort:

"I hope you found it amusing—the Tower?"

"I found it damp," I said. "I've been chilly ever since."

"If you will go to queer places, what can you expect?"

"I have to go somewhere, as long as I continue to exist," I replied, curtly.

"Possibly, but you needn't make us both ridiculous by parading London with a guide-book under your arm. Everybody is laughing at you."

"Well, I can't help that. It's a good source of information, a guide book."

"For a man who knows London as well as you do, it's an absurd affectation."

"My dear Isabel, you are angry when I indulge in a little frivolity in Paris, and you are still angry when I try to be serious in London. There's no pleasing you, I'm afraid."

Just as Isabel was about to retort, Lady Sara approached us with an inoffensive looking young man who wanted tea, and while Isabel was asking him whether he took sugar or not, her ladyship turned to me.

"How is she?" she whispered.

"Very angry with me," I replied. "She—"

Then I paused in amazement.

A demure looking maid had replaced Lady Sara's footman, and was bringing a plate of cake. Just as she was about to place it on the table, she saw me.

"*Gott im Himmel!*" she exclaimed, and dropped tray, plate, and cake on the floor at my feet.

"Of all the extraordinary—" began Lady Sara.

"Hilda Schmidt, by George!" I exclaimed, forgetting everything in my excitement.

"*Ja, ja!*" cried the well remembered voice that had hurled imprecations at the poultice.

Hilda Schmidt it was, and no mistake, but so altered by the exchange from the finery of Mme. Duval to the neat black gown worn by Lady Sara's housemaids that I would scarcely have known her. Even the curls had disappeared, and the blond hair was brushed tidily back under a becoming white cap.

I turned to Lady Sara, accusingly.

"You knew?" I said.

"I couldn't help knowing," she said, laughingly. "You told me her name, and I had just engaged her two days before."

A dim remembrance floated through my mind of having given Lady Sara's name, among others, to Fräulein Schmidt as a possible employer.

"I couldn't ask her very much about it, as I can't speak her language," continued her ladyship. "My German housekeeper is the only one who can talk to the girl, and she is teaching her English, I believe. But the part of her story that I had heard corresponded with what you told me, so I thought I would spring her on you, as you Americans say. Good joke, eh, Isabel?"

Isabel did not answer. Perhaps she was too amazed. At any rate, she gazed at Hilda with cheeks that were scarlet and eyes that were very bright. I had never seen them brighter.

That prudent damsel, dismayed at the havoc she had wrought, gathered up the cake and the fragment of plate, and disappeared.

In the meantime, Lady Sara, who was enjoying the affair immensely, took pity on the curiosity of her guests, and retailed the whole story, sparing Isabel, and laughing heartily at me.

"So that is the girl?" said Isabel, in an uncertain tone, as we stood alone at the tea-table, a moment later.

"That is the girl," I responded, dully.

Just then Charlie's voice floated over to us.

"I'll be hanged if I didn't think he was kiddin' me when he said she didn't speak French or English, but, by Jove, he was tellin' the truth! Seemed sort of queer, don't you know, to take out a girl that you couldn't talk to? Of course, I was there with some chaps—"

"Horace," said Isabel, very sweetly. "Here's another cup of tea—without any sugar."

And I took it and slipped a ring on the hand that gave it to me.



For some time neither spoke

The Wickedness of Miss Marietta

BY EDWIN ASA DIX

Author of "Unconsidered Trifles," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY IRMA DEREMEAUX

THE wedding ceremony was over, and Melie and her husband were receiving the congratulations of the people crowding into the little country parlor. The congratulations were many and sincere. Melie had lived among these village people ever since she had first come, a disconsolate little orphan, to the home of her two aunts. There was real regret in the heart of every one, at the thought that it might be years before they would see the girl again. The bridegroom, fresh from a theological seminary, was a missionary-to-be, and was to sail with his bride at once for some far off island in the Pacific seas.

It was a pretty scene in the prim, low-ceiled parlor, that cheerful Monday afternoon in September. The sunlight slanted in through the small panes of

the side window, falling directly on the bridal couple as they stood greeting their friends. The young Reverend Adoniram's face was alight with a commingling of personal happiness and of holy zeal, and everyone who looked upon him felt beyond the possibility of a doubt that Melie was fortunately mated and that her future was in safe and true hands.

With the congratulations for the niece were blended condolences for the aunts, who were now to lose their charge. The most of the condolences were addressed to Aunt Marietta, who was by far the stronger personality of the two. Aunt Lavinia, the younger sister, sweet and placid and timid, was content to be an echo of her sister, to whom she looked up with loyal admiration.

As Miss Marietta stood there between Melie and Miss Lavinia, greeting the guests one by one and hearing their varied words of commiseration at her approaching loss, none remotely guessed that her chief inward emotion was a fierce and fearful joy, as at a coming release from thralldom. Marietta had guarded well the steps of her niece during all the latter's childhood and girlhood. Never had a child more careful and devoted bringing-up. The sisters had watchfully yet wisely governed her every move, rearing her in all the accepted canons of belief and conduct in practice in the straight New England environment of the little Maine village, and giving her a heart and mind pure and fresh and unspotted as some fair meadow-flower. As Marietta stood there, now and then turning her glance upon Melie's flushed and tender face, she might feel that the charge so long ago left her by her dying brother had been well and worthily fulfilled.

And yet Miss Marietta was not thinking of this at all. She was thinking that in an hour they would drive away, and that she would at last be left to order her own life for the first time without responsibility to any one.

For Marietta had all her life been at heart a revolutionary, without any opportunity to put her ideas into practice. Until middle spinsterhood, the care of her aged and clinging mother had claimed her energies, and even before her mother had died, this child had come into their little home, with all her burden of infancy and trustfulness.

So it was that Miss Marietta had walked strictly all her days. In the village and the neighboring community none was more irreproachable than she, none more careful in the observance of every local traditionary rite, social, ethical, and religious. She was of an immeasurable conscientiousness when her duty to others was in question; and Melie had been the object of that conscientiousness from her mother's death until this day.

And now Melie, her good habits firmly fixed, her beliefs grounded, her future, to all human seeming, happily assured,

was to go forth and far away, and the aunts' responsibility toward their niece was successfully and finally acquitted.

Miss Marietta looked calm and composed, and she stood smiling pleasantly, but her mind was in a tumult—a tumult not of sorrow for a coming loss, but of eager anticipation, of a leaping joy at independence at last grandly gained.

When Melie's carriage-wheels had at length rolled joyously away down the long, sandy country road, and the last of the company had gone from the house and down the front path, Marietta on the porch turned to Lavinia.

"Thank Heaven!" she said, with vehement sincerity.

"Why, sister!" exclaimed Lavinia.

Marietta surveyed her.

"You're too old an' set to take any harm from new ideas," she observed. "So I guess I'm safe at last."

"Sister, what *do* you mean?"

"Mean?" repeated Marietta. "I mean that I'm goin' to live as I want to for my own sake, after this; not as I'd ought to do f'r somebody else's sake. I'm goin' to have a good time from now on."

Lavinia looked at her quite helplessly, uncomprehendingly. She brushed off some of the rice that had lodged in the folds of her new gray silk.

"Come," said Marietta with abruptness, "we've got to go in an' clear up some of that clutter b'fore nightfall."

The two found plenty to occupy their energies indoors, and when they finally paused to prepare supper, there was much still left to do.

"Well, we're goin' to miss Melie terrible," sighed Miss Lavinia, as she carefully arranged some pieces of the wedding-cake in the silver basket. "But it's a real comfort to know she's so well married."

"Oh, Melie 'll be all right," responded Miss Marietta, with the air of one who had delivered the goods and obtained a receipt and felt no further accountability. "Did ye notice Mrs. Gary's new black bunnit?"

And the talk, prolonged through supper-time, ranged over the details of costume and demeanor of everyone present at the wedding.



"I'm goin' t' have a good time from now on"

When the meal was finished and the dishes washed and things cleared away, Miss Lavinia's thoughts reverted to the parlor.

"There's lots to do in there yit," she sighed. "I s'pose it'd ought to be finished up."

"We aint goin' to finish it to-night," announced her sister. "I'm tired, an' so air you, an' I'm goin' to leave the rest till to-morrow."

Lavinia, on her way out of the dining-room, paused in surprise.

"I never knew ye to leave off b'fore, Marietty, as long as there was anythin' left to be done," she said.

"Well, I'm goin' to, after this. What's the use of finishin' up that parlor to-night, any more'n to-morrow mornin'?"

And Marietta marched past her sister into the sitting-room.

Lavinia, not unwillingly, for she was unwontedly tired, followed her in,

turned up the lamp, and with an air of relief dropped into her accustomed chair.

"P'raps it's jest as well," she assented, as she took up her knitting. "But 'taint like you, an' 'taint like me."

"I'm goin' to do a good many things from now on, that ain't like me," said Marietta with decision.

The consternation felt by Lavinia at her sister's remarks on the porch came anew to her now.

"Marietty, what things air ye meanin'?" she inquired with anxiety.

Marietta had pushed away from her side of the table the stiff,

straight chair in which she usually sat, and had pulled up the tufted lounging-chair seldom or never used by either of the two. She was about to sink luxuriously into its springy and upholstered depths, but at her sister's inquiry, she stopped and stood straight.

"I'll show you two or three of 'em right now," she said mysteriously, and disappeared into the bedroom.

A minute later she returned. In her hands were several articles, which she proceeded to set down firmly on the table, one by one, before the gaze of her astonished sister. The first was a fresh, buff-yellow paper covered copy of one of a celebrated series of exciting works of fiction. The second was a very old volume of Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason." Then came a bottle of red wine and a brand new pack of playing-cards; and lastly, a handbill which had been left at the door announcing a perform-

ance of "The Lady of Lyons," to be given in the village hall that week by a traveling theatrical company.

"My sakes alive!" ejaculated the dazed Lavinia.

She looked up from the table's disreputable burden to her sister standing tall and determined on the farther side.

"Where did these things come from, Marietty?"

"The novel an' the cards I bought, when I was over in Portland, three years ago. They've been put away ever since. The other book's an infidel book an' used to be gran'father's. I saved it when mother gave most of his books away, that time. She never knew."

"But the wine?"

"I bought it down at the store, last fall. I told 'em I thought it was a good thing to have wine in the house in case o' sickness."

"Why, sister! How c'd you say sech a thing?"

"It's true, aint it?"

"We haint never needed any."

"Well, I'm goin' to need some after this. I've allers had a hankerin' to know what it tasted like."

Lavinia's knitting had dropped into her lap. Her thinly veined old fingers fumbled with the needles nervously, as she sat there quite dazed at these revelations of depravity. Then she took up the buff-yellow book, holding it gingerly.

"It's a Dime Novel!" she uttered.

"Well, ef I'm goin' to read any kind of a novel, an' I haint ever read one yit, I guess it might as well be a dime novel as a dollar novel."

"But, Marietta—"

The other began, then paused, wholly at a loss. The situation was too bewildering for words.

Mechanically she reached out and picked up the handbill, which she scanned, peering closely at it through her



Several articles she set down before her astonished sister

spectacles. She looked up, wholly appalled.

"Marietty!" she whisperingly exclaimed. "You aint goin' to the theayter, air ye?"

"That's what I kep' the notice fur," rejoined the other with positiveness.

"But everybody'll know it."

"Let 'em."

Lavinia gasped, then subsided again, grappling with this new development.

Marietta added:

"An' I aint goin' to church nex' Sunday."

There was a frightened silence on the other side of the table.

"I haven't missed a day in fifty-four year—not sence I was three years old," went on Miss Marietta's rigid voice. "Come cold, come hot, blow high, blow low, you an' I've been there in our pew, Lavinny, every Sunday in every year when the bell stopped ringing—except that you was away f'r 'leven weeks, the time you had that pleurisy, an' that's a thing you couldn't help. An' ye've l'arnt Melie to be reg'lar, too. I guess I've ained a right to stay home now an' then ef I choose."

There was a considerable silence. La-

vinia was no arguer. She could think of no effective remonstrance, and, moreover, it did not remotely occur to her to try to swerve her sister from an announced decision.

Marietta sat down in the soft, capacious chair with a sigh of comfort.

For some time neither spoke.

At last Lavinia ventured timidly:

"Were ye meanin' to read one of them—them books right off now? You haven't read your *Advocate* yit."

The *Advocate* came every Saturday. Lavinia always read it on Sunday evening and Marietta on Monday evening. The current number now lay on the table underneath the wine-bottle and the pack of cards.

Marietta had taken up the novel. She had not opened it, but had been absently studying the cover-picture of a grizzled Western scout shooting at an Indian on horseback.

"It's a reel bright number, too," added Lavinia. "There's an extry good sermon in it this week."

Reluctantly and as if against her will, Marietta replaced the novel upon the copy of Paine and drew out the *Advocate* from underneath the wine-bottle.

"P'raps I'd better read this to-night," she said slowly.

She turned over the pages of the familiar religious weekly and her eyes ran down its columns.

"It does look kind o' interestin', as you say, an' the other 'll keep till to-morrow night."

She turned to the recommended sermon, and quiet ensued, broken only by the tick of the clock and the click of the knitting-needles. Miss Lavinia had finally set the latter in mo-



"I couldn't help thinkin' how funny it 'd be"



She was found putting her books and cards in the kitchen-range

tion again, though several stitches were dropped before she could fully recover command of the implements. At the end of the hour, Miss Marietta rose and put away the articles she had brought from the bedroom, and the two sisters went to bed.

The finishing of the tidying-up process in the parlor and elsewhere throughout the house engrossed the energies of both during all the next day. When the supper-table was set, Marietta produced the bottle of wine and set it down by her plate with a slight bump, indicative of fixed purpose.

"It's jest the time f'r somethin' to set a body up," she remarked as they took their seats. "I'm that tired! I know you

wont have any, Lavinny, but I'm goin' to. I've never had a drop of anythin' in my life, 'cept at church. By the way, that was quite an article in the *Advocate* about Tahiti, wa'n't it? Jest where Adoniram an' Melie 're goin'."

"Yes," rejoined Lavinia. "Did you read what it said 'bout the featherly palm-trees an' the coral reefs an' all that? I do think Melie's sure to like it."

The day's work had occupied them quite to the exclusion of conversation about Melie and even of many thoughts of her, and the two now found a revived interest in speculating on the conditions of her new life. Marietta poured the tea, and drank two cups with relish as she talked and ate. It was not until she was

rolling up her napkin that she remembered the wine.

"I declare!" she said, a little blankly, surveying the bottle at her side. "I clean forgot about this. I guess it's too late now. I didn't mean to drink any tea. I don't b'lieve they'd go very well together."

"No, I don' know's they would, exac'ly," agreed Lavinia, secretly vastly pleased. "Air ye goin' to play with them cards to-night?"

"Yes, I'm goin' to try 'em."

"Aint it 'most same as gamblin', Marietty?"

"Course not. Where's the harm in cards, when you come to think of it? I've allers wanted to play 'em."

And after supper Marietta produced the pack, together with "The Age of Reason." She had never examined cards closely before, and she ran them over with bold and curious scrutiny.

"They're the queerest picters you ever saw, aint they?" she remarked, holding up the jack of clubs for inspection.

Lavinia did not offer to touch it, but she peered at it obediently.

"I don't exac'ly know how they're played with," Marietta resumed, trying to shuffle the pack as she had once or twice seen others do, and making a conspicuous failure of the operation. "Mebbe I c'n make up some game."

"It don't look half as nice as checkers," commented Lavinia.

The two usually played checkers in the mid-week evenings.

There was visible a growing dissatisfaction on Marietta's face as she aimlessly sorted over the cards, seeking some means of testing their alleged fascination.

"I guess I'll have to git some one to show me how, sometime," she said presently. "I didn't much mean to play with 'em to-night, anyway. I'd ruther read."

"Goin' to read gran'father's book?" queried Lavinia apprehensively.

Marietta had picked up the worn volume of Paine.

"Well, I don't know," she ruminated, gazing at the plain and faded green cloth cover. "It looks like heavy readin' when you're tired. I guess, Lavinny,"

she said frankly, "I'd kind o' ruther play checkers."

It was on the following evening, Wednesday, that "The Lady of Lyons" was to be given in the village hall, and after the midday dinner-hour the elder sister, not without trepidation, went down to the store to buy a ticket.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Marietty," said the store-keeper affably. "What c'n I do fur ye to-day?"

"Ye've got tickets here, haven't ye, f'r that—f'r that—"

"That lecture Friday evening?" finished the other briskly. "Yes. Sounds reel int'restin', don't it?—'The Life and times of Walpole.' My wife an' I are both goin'."

"You've got—tickets f'r the—theayter, too, haven't ye?" faltered Miss Marietta.

"Oh, yes, we've got to keep both kinds," smiled Mr. Potts apologetically. "Some like one thing, some another. Mebbe you'd like tickets fur that, Miss Marietty," he added jestingly, rubbing his hands at the good humored pleasantry.

"Who, me?" said she with a start. She drew back a little. "Well, s'pose I did. Why shouldn't—"

"Ha, ha!" laughed the storekeeper, pleased at his little joke. "No offense, I hope, Miss Marietty. I couldn't help thinkin' how funny it'd be ef you *was* to go to the play. Two lecture tickets, did you say? I s'pose Miss Lavinny 'll be goin', too. They're twenty-five cents apiece."

Marietta paid out the money half-mechanically. Her face, as she emerged from the store, was crestfallen. Yet, on the way home, her step seemed to recover its elasticity. In fact, she became conscious of a distinct feeling of relief.

"I'd like to have seen that theayter-play," she ruminated regretfully. "But I was dreadin' bein' seen there like everything. Mebbe it's turned out jest as well."

The wine, the cards, and the books were not touched that evening.

"They don't seem to pan out as well as I expected," observed Marietta, feeling obliged to account to her sister for

the omission. "I guess I'll git Mr. Potts to change that wine off f'r the box of soap we want. Let's have a game of checkers."

The sisters thoroughly enjoyed the Friday evening lecture, which was long and erudite. The next day, Saturday, Marietta changed the wine at the store, and later she was found by Lavinia putting two books and a pack of cards into the kitchen-range.

"Well, I guess I got my satisfaction out of 'em," she explained. "I don't know's I reelly want to bother to read either of them books; an' as f'r the cards, I can't make head or tail of 'em. I shouldn't want anybody to find 'em in the house after we're dead an' buried."

"An' you're goin' to church to-morrow?" questioned Lavinia, radiant.

"No, I aint!" snapped Marietta. "That's one thing I'm a-goin' to stand on."

The next day was brilliantly fine, and the church bells pealed joyously from the village spires. Miss Lavinia arrayed herself for church. Miss Marietta was also putting on her Sunday things.

"Goin', after all?" again asked the younger sister, hopefully.

"I'm goin' f'r a walk," replied Marietta rather shortly. "It's too fine to stay indoors. I'll come with ye as fur as the church, p'r'aps."

And locking up the little house, the two elderly ladies moved off down the

village street. As they walked, they fell in with others, many of whom had much to say about the wedding and about Melie and her husband and their hopeful future; and when the church was reached, the sisters had become the center of a cheerful and talkative knot of neighbors. Wholly against her intent, Miss Marietta found herself, partly by an almost irresistible moral suasion, partly by the unconscious pressure of the surrounding group, impelled slowly up the wide steps.

Between the huge, white, Ionic columns of the porch she stopped.

"You go on in, Lavinny," she began. "I—"

"Ah, Miss Marietta!" exclaimed the minister, who, with his wife, had come up just behind them. "So glad to see you both as usual, this beautiful Sabbath day! Have you had a word from Melie?"

He had taken her lace-mittened hand, and as he still held and pressed it, he moved forward into the sanctuary. Miss Marietta accompanied him perforce, and was irrevocably inside before he released her to greet other members of the flock.

"Plague take it all!" muttered Marietta to herself with acute disgust, as she entered her pew, followed by Lavinia. "It's a sight harder to break off old ways than I ever s'posed. I guess I'll have to give it up, after all."

And Miss Marietta bowed her head in prayer.

The Embers

BY MAUDE RADFORD WARREN

Author of "The Land of the Living," etc.

SONIA BALMENOWSKY unbarred the rough door of her little white-washed cabin. The silence inside had become intolerable; she shaded her eyes with her thin hands, only to find equally intolerable the white sunken roadway, with its two monotonous rows of cabins, and in the distance the political prison. Beyond was the circle of low hills, white

like the frozen street, dull as the gray Siberian skies above. The only person in sight, a sick convict in a long gray overcoat with the yellow diamond on the back, was dragging himself from the Kará Mines. Under the shadow of her palm Sonia's somber young face looked out listlessly. The only vivid touch about her was her short, bright, wavy hair,

drawn low over her forehead and cheeks to hide the scars from Cossack boot-heels.

The door of the adjoining cabin swung open and a girl, scarcely more than a child, hurried out and stood looking breathlessly at Sonia.

"May I come and stand by you, Sonia?" she said, her wide blue eyes full of adoration.

Sonia looked at her lifelessly. "Come if you wish to, Marie."

The girl bounded forward, and taking Sonia's hand covered it with kisses.

"Oh, Sonia," she whispered intensely, "to have been you just for a week; to have had something more than the will to help Russia; to have had the chance! And I may be here all my life—all my life. Never, never, never to be able to help my country!"

"Hush, *dushenka*," murmured Sonia, her pale lips twitching.

"Sometimes I dream I can help," said Marie; "and then I wake in the dawn, and there is my little deaf and dumb sister lying by my side. And I cannot teach her to love Russia. I can only feed and dress her. I think of Zinaida's words at her court-martial: 'Forgive me, my country; I can give you so little—only my life.' And I envy her that she was permitted. But I envy you so much more. Sonia, for your life is not lived; your memories—you can live again in your memories. You can, perhaps, hope to act again—"

"Oh, hush!" cried Sonia sharply. "I would rather forget. Already I feel as old as Russia."

She checked herself at the girl's wondering glance.

"You cannot understand," she said. "I cannot explain. The young and the old speak two different languages in Russia. I am twenty—but old."

"But you will be young again when we are free," began the girl.

"When we are free," said Sonia. "Marie Nikoleavna, take care of the little deaf and dumb sister."

She smoothed the girl's hair with a gentle gesture, and smiled pityingly. Before Marie could speak they heard the sound of sleigh-bells. Far down the road

they saw a sleigh. Nearer and nearer it came, until it stopped before the door of the tin-roofed house of the commandant. A tall woman stood up and was assisted to the ground by the obsequious *gendarme* who was her escort.

Marie was leaning forward interestedly. Again Sonia smoothed her hair.

"Good-by, little one," she said.

She entered her cabin and closed the door. It was a narrow little place, with bare floor, rough walls of squared logs, covered with dingy whitewash, and two small, nearly square windows. Between the windows stood a rough pine table without a cloth; opposite was a narrow single bedstead, covered with a coarse gray blanket. Over this hung the rudely sketched portrait of a young man. Three chairs stood beneath a shelf on which were a few dishes and a samovar. Close to the tiny stove crouched an old woman of large, bony frame, who scarcely moved when Sonia entered.

Sonia sat down and took up some sewing. She bent toward the light, as she did so, brushing back the bright waves that drooped across her forehead and cheeks. Then, painfully self-conscious, she drew down the hair again, and let the sewing lie idle on her knee. Presently she heard steps on the snow outside. A knock sounded and the commandant entered, followed by a tall, veiled lady in furs.

"Sonia Balmenowsky," he said, "the Countess Nathalie Klovski will sit with you for an hour."

He bowed to the visitor, and departed.

Sonia had not had a visitor since she had come to the Kará Mines, and yet she showed no unusual excitement. She offered her caller a chair, and, in answer to the gesture the countess made toward the old woman, said:

"That is only Katia Rossikova. She is half-mad—understands nothing. You have come far, *madame*? It is strange that you were given permission to talk alone to me."

The countess threw back her veil, and showed a pale, beautiful face.

"It is strange, indeed, that I could come," she said, in a deep voice that trembled a little. "In spite of my power,

I have had to work—to scheme for a year just to plan this. Do you know me, Sonia Balmenowsky?" she added.

Sonia shook her head.

"I do not see so well," she said, "as I did before—as I did—"

"As you did before the Cossacks trampled on your face and body as you lay on the platform at Peterhoff after you shot General Anuchin," said the countess.

She came close to Sonia and took her passive hands.

"You struck a blow for your country that day, Sonia Balmenowsky, and you freed me; and I have driven hundreds of miles to see you."

"I think—I think—" said Sonia slowly, "that you are General Anuchin's cousin. I saw you twice, I remember, then, when you stood by him and in the morning. But how could you come here, even you, so safe, so 'trustworthy' to the government?"

The countess sat down.

"You speak as if I were a stranger to you, and yet, how well I know you. I seem to have known you from the moment when I first saw you. When you came to live in the house next ours I felt that you were one of the young who hoped to free Russia. I saw you from my window, as you went and came, with the little black velvet bag in your hand. I wanted to join you; I wanted to say: 'Take me; teach me. I, too, would help Russia. I loathe the bread of my cousin. The cries of the peasants, whose backs he has bared to the knout, are in my ears. I see the faces of the girls he has given to the Cossacks.' But I was a coward, Sonia Balmenowsky."

"There are many cowards in Russia," said Sonia in a dull voice.

"But it was you who gave me courage," went on the countess. "On the morning of that day, when he and I passed you, you carried the little black velvet bag. I knew what lay in it, I knew that you intended to kill him, and I pressed on his arm and made him go slowly, and with all my soul, inwardly, I cried to you, 'Throw it! Throw it! What matter if it kill me? Russia will be free from him.' But you did not hear

me, Sonia Balmenowsky, and you went by to save my life that I did not want."

"That is true," said Sonia. "We do not kill the innocent."

"And that is why, in the afternoon, you shot him and tried to shoot yourself. You might have escaped if you had thrown the bomb. You might have struck another blow for Russia, and your escape would have given new power to the weaker ones. But you would not kill me, and thus you gave me courage. I have driven hundreds of miles to thank you, and to tell you."

Sonia looked at her glowing, beautiful face for a moment, and then said:

"You are young still, too—and you are older than I am."

"What do you mean?" asked the countess.

"Nothing," said Sonia.

"It was your youth that impressed the world," said the countess; "your youth and your willingness to die. All young Russia is like that."

The old woman at the fire, roused by the voices, broke into a wailing murmur, and the countess glanced at her a moment, before she said:

"Sonia Balmenowsky, I do not see the triumphant face I expected to see. Do you not know that your name, spoken at a revolutionary meeting, will bring the men and women to their feet with cheers and prayers? Do you not know that your body, maimed by the Cossacks, scarred in prison, stands to them for the body of Russia? Do you not know that you have poured courage and hope into the hearts of thousands?"

Sonia looked around the gloomy little room, following, with her eyes, a thin spear of dim sunlight that splintered on the wall.

"I have not wondered what Russia was thinking of me," she said in a low tone.

The countess bent toward her and held out her arms:

"Sonia Balmenowsky, what is it?" she asked, tenderly. "Are you not happy here? But that is a foolish question. You should be happy anywhere; or, rather, why should you question whether you are happy, or not?"

Sonia stared at the countess for a moment; then her lifeless eyes smoldered. She covered her face with her hands and dropped to the older woman's knees.

"Oh!" she cried, "and you have come to honor me; to tell me how they rise at home at the mention of my name; and I—I wonder if it is all a lie? If I ever lived anything but a lie!"

She burst into a storm of sobs, and the Countess Nathalie bent over her, with a bewildered face.

"You must know what it is," Sonia said brokenly, "to live in dead walls, in a routine. Then, suddenly, the sun breaks through and you think your soul is free. It was so with me. I waked to know that I was one with all those throbbing young hearts, eager to free Russia. Oh, we were so young! As you say, we were all so ready to die. All of us wanted to cry, like Zanaida, 'Forgive me, my country; I can give you so little—only my life.' And we were sincere. Who can doubt that? Who questions it? Not the young, oh, never the young."

"And I lived through the torture of prison. What did I care for the satyr faces that peered into my cell? I lived through the journey here. There were sick babies and weak women, filthy typhoid-ridden prisons, with men and women crowded in them like lumps of swept-up dirt. There were those who died in the marching. But I saw only the sky above, sometimes blue, and the tall, fair birches by the roadside; but always, always, the glorious vision of Russia free! I had been able to help! What were my scars, my shames? I had given my best to Russia. Let what would happen to the husk. Then I reached here—"

She paused, tremblingly. The countess caught her breath in sympathy, and the old woman lifted her head and wailed loudly.

"When I came here—the young, how they welcomed me! But the old—they looked at me with pitying eyes. I cannot tell you what it was, to turn from the burning eyes of the youth to those older ones, which held a bitter secret I did not share. When I spoke with them they talked of Russia as it was; as of a coun-

try in another world, or a country that was dead. They would speak of their days in the college at Geneva, when they sat in the balconies overlooking the sea and planned how to free Russia and what could be done for the people after the great days came. It was as if they stretched out cold hands to a long dead fire. There was never a word of the present—of the future, and when I talked—when I told them of our plans, of what would soon be in Russia, they fell silent.

"And then I found that when the young ones were enthusiastic I, too, fell silent; less and less would I talk to them about the future. It is the Russian sickness, Nathalie Klovski—indifference, hopelessness. Only I have not been indifferent, and I have suffered. I cannot tell. Do you understand me? Now—now I am dead. That girl who acted was not I as I am now. I ask myself, 'Was that, too, sincere? Did I love Russia utterly, or was that just the egoism of youth? Was it egoism? Was it romance? Was I right? How dared I judge and act?' Do you see?"

"If only I were the woman I was, if I could feel as I did then, I should have no regrets. I could live in the moment, with no past or future, except Russia's. But the exhilaration of sacrifice, it does not light me now. I remember now that I was young, and am old; that I had hope, and am hopeless; that I had beauty, and am scarred; that I had a lover, and he is dead. I want my youth, my hope, my beauty, my lover. I am dead, and I want life. Do you see how I have failed? I am crying out for myself, not for Russia. Was my love ever for Russia? Was it for myself always? Have I come to find out what I am, here—here where there is no chance for redemption?"

She poured out her words passionately, beating her breast, gazing hungrily in the other woman's face.

"Sonia Balmenowsky," said the countess, after a pause, "it is just your sick body and nerves speaking, not your soul. You could never have given us all the courage, inspired us all as you have if you were a weakling. Good cannot come

out of ill. If you could realize what you have done—"

"Tell me one thing; tell me one deed that every man's judgment would applaud; tell me one life in which I have sown the seed of unmistakable good!" cried Sonia.

"What I have dedicated my life to is your gift," said the countess, her fine face glowing. "I am doing humbler work than you did—and I think harder," she added with effort. "Sonia Balmenowsky, I suppose it is difficult for you to realize what a life could be without love of country in it. I, and the people of my class, we do not love Russia. Why should we love what we need make no sacrifice for? But we may love people. The only person I ever loved was my sister, and she was lost to me through Prince Pablodar. You know him?"

Sonia nodded.

"He has been given the duties of my cousin. My sister—he took her youth—everything, and she would not live." The voice of the countess quivered, and she spoke huskily. "My cousin knew, but he would not resent, because he needed the power of the Prince."

She paused so long, that Sonia asked, "You were going to say?"

"They tell us," said the countess, "that it takes less courage to do a great deed when all your world applauds; and, yet, that kind of courage is not mine. I hate Prince Pablodar with so deadly a hatred that my whole body burns and shakes at the thought of him. But he loves me as much as he can love. And I—I know some of the needs of Russia. I cannot kill him as you killed my cousin. I have not that courage; but I can influence him. If you were in Russia now you would know that in our Province so many backs are not knouted; the wild beasts of Cossacks are kept somewhat in bounds. Here and there a prisoner manages to escape; a sentence of death is changed to exile; a term of exile is shortened. I see into many places. I do the little I can. Each day I think, 'Perhaps the world will last just one day more. One day more, then, I must do my little to help Russia.'"

"Then you are married to him?" breathed Sonia.

The Countess Nathalie bowed her head.

"You have not killed him. When your power over him goes," said Sonia in a strained voice, "then do you think that you can kill him?"

"I tell you I have not that courage," said the countess.

Sonia drew a long breath. She leaned her elbows on the knees of the countess, looking hard in her face. Bewilderment and indignation broke through the mask of indifference she had so long worn. As of old, she thrilled with the thought of Russia. And this woman had the chance to strike a blow that would tell far more than hers had told. Prince Pablodar was her husband. She could reach out her hands in the dark and kill him. What was the saving of a peasant girl, here and there, to a chance of terrifying all Russia with the death of the Prince? The Russian Government could see ten thousand Cossacks killed without a quiver. What were common men? But the loss of a man like Pablodar shook it to the core. And this woman was afraid. She pushed away a sublime opportunity, and, instead, she saved a few old men from beatings. Some shrinking from blood, perhaps, held her back. She could endure a long drawn-out martyrdom at her husband's side, but she had not the courage to end it all with one stroke!

Waves of passionate feeling seemed to sweep Sonia to her feet.

The old woman, startled by her movement, began to wail in a harsh, mournful tone, the begging song which exiles in their march on the road to Siberia sing to those who will, perhaps, give them food or money:

Do not forget the unwilling travelers;
Do not forget the long-imprisoned.
Feed us, oh, our Fathers, help us!
Feed and help the poor and needy.
Have compassion, oh, our Fathers!
Have compassion, oh, our Mothers!
For the sake of good, have mercy,
On the prisoners—the shut-up ones.
Behind the walls of stone, and gratings—
Behind bars and locks of iron,
We are held in close confinement.
We have parted from our Fathers;

From our Mothers.
We from all our kin have parted.
We are prisoners.
Pity us, oh, our Fathers!

Sonia moved over to her bed and looked long at the portraits on the wall. It was the picture of her lover, hanged for a successful assassination—an exalted, seer-like face, with wide, ardent eyes. She walked to the window and gazed out on the snowy street. In the distance she saw a plodding squad of convicts coming back from work for their dinner, a cordon of Cossacks guarding them with bayoneted-rifles. The prisoners walked with heavy, bent heads, as if time carried no meaning. Young Marie Nikoleavna came from the house next door leading the little deaf and dumb sister, attending the child's steps so carefully that she had no opportunity to glance up for a sight of Sonia.

A long time Sonia stood at the window, watching the tentative sunlight, her lips working, her eyes glowing. When she turned, the Countess Nathalie saw a transfigured face.

"Since you know the work you have given me the strength to do," said the countess, "you have taken hope, Sonia Balmenowsky?"

"I have taken hope," replied Sonia in a thrilling voice.

"Listen, *madame*. I believe now it is not given us to know whether we are right or wrong, brave or wise. Perhaps

my test has come. Perhaps it was not the killing of Anuchin. Perhaps it is this, this uncertainty, this indifference and despair, which I have not borne with patience—It may be this is my test. Did my work count or did I do well—what does that matter? What does it matter that I do not know whether to have faith in myself, or not. To meet the fate of the day, without regret—if it is only to guide the steps of a dumb child or feed a mad old woman, to put myself outside the fate—that must be my part. Do you understand me?"

"I—I do not know," faltered the countess.

She looked into Sonia's inspired eyes.

"Do you mean that you will be, what you would call, of the youth again—those that can work for Russia?"

"I do not know," Sonia said with a smile.

She went over to her lover's portrait, and passed her fingers caressingly over its rough surface.

"There is the commandant coming for you," she said, glancing out of the window. "I do not know anything, Nathalie Klovski, except that it is not given me to know, and, yet, I have faith. We shall never meet again. I bless you for coming, and may you have strength to meet your life day by day."

The two women clasped each other in a long embrace. Then the commandant knocked sharply on the barred door.

The Hat-Box of Cupid

BY MARY IMLAY TAYLOR

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES E. CHAMBERS

THE Right Reverend stood outside the gates at the Grand Central; he was watching the white lettering over gate eighteen; it would open in five minutes. His age might have been anything from seventy to ninety; he had snow white hair and the complexion and eyes of a boy, and his figure had not lost the erectness of his youth. In reality,

the Right Reverend was called, behind his back, "an old dear," by certain rosy and dimpled members of his diocese. But when your eyes twinkle and you have still a charming smile, half-humorous, half-philosophical, and wholly sympathetic, well then, you may expect to lose something in dignity to gain much in affection.

He had given up watching gate eighteen and was regarding the hurrying throng, when Miss Betty Savile appeared—with Dewey under her arm. Betty had never looked more lovely, her cheeks were pink and her eyes sparkled with anger, and her trim, tailor-made figure and the soft veil floating on the brim of her daring hat, made a distinct sensation. As for Dewey—he was black and silky, with a tail like a squirrel's, being a Pomeranian and weighing exactly three pounds and six ounces.

The Right Reverend smiled and Betty came up panting.

"Oh, bishop, I'm so glad to see you! Yes, I'm all by myself. No, mother's down at Oyster Bay. Oh, I've had a horrid experience. What in the world is that?" she had stumbled over a leather hat-box. "Oh, I beg pardon!" she cried, and clasped Dewey more firmly, for he had begun to yap wildly at the bishop, "I—I didn't see it."

"It isn't mine," said the Right Reverend gently, "and," he looked down at it carefully, "it's apparently empty."

"So it is," said Betty. Then she looked up at the genial old face opposite. "Could you tell me—do you know who can help me about Dewey?"

"Eh?" said the bishop, a little startled.

"He's under my arm," Miss Savile explained naïvely. "I'm taking him to Boston, and they wont let him go in the Pullman, and they wont let me go in the baggage-car—railroad men are just horrid beasts!"

"I've heard them called corporations and trusts," said the churchman amiably, "but beasts—well, possibly, even certainly, if they have been disagreeable to you."

"Disagreeable!" cried Miss Savile indignantly, "they've been hateful. When you're a woman and you've got a dog, they simply combine to inflict tortures upon you!"

"Good gracious," he exclaimed mildly. "My dear child, tortures?"

"Yes," she said firmly, "tortures! What can I do? Tie poor Dewey to the steam-pipes? That's where they tie dogs in the baggage-car—to the steam-pipes! And they get hot—nearly red hot—and

then they throw the trunks around and—and there's the poor dog, with no water to drink, in a hail of trunks, and they wont let me stay with him!"

"Upon my soul!" said the bishop. "I had no idea it was as bad as that—hot pipes? You can't mean it?"

"I do," said Miss Savile. "It's a regular Purgatory—hot pipes and all."

"I've never pictured it with hot pipes myself," he remarked genially.

"Well, I hope you will—for railroad men!" snapped Miss Savile. "But, oh, what can I do?" she added tearfully. "The train's going in five minutes and I can't—can't let Dewey go there alone, and they've been rude to me. What *shall* I do?"

Just then a boy, running past to catch a local, stumbled over the hat-box and it rolled against their feet. It was of light leather, new and spick and span, and the cover had come off at last. It was remarkably empty.

"My dear," said the churchman blandly, "behold the means! This hat-box contains no hat, but," his eyes twinkled, "could it contain Dewey?"

"Oh!" said Betty, and then: "You're a monster! He'd smother."

"But there's such a thing as boring a hole," suggested the bishop; "in fact, several." He looked at his watch. "We've got four minutes—with four minutes and a pocket-knife—"

"Oh, can you?" Betty dimpled at last. "Can you really? I'd thank you a thousand times!"

"The laborer is worthy of his hire," said he. "I ask no more," and he opened his pocket-knife.

Betty watched him a moment in breathless silence.

"Good gracious!" she exclaimed, after this space of thought, "suppose—suppose we're caught smuggling him—*suppose he barks!*"

The Right Reverend looked thoughtful.

"Can't you induce him to use discretion," he suggested. "Give him a sugar-plum, a caramel, or a bit of—er—of chewing-gum."

"Ugh!" she shuddered, "I never use it!"



Gently, very gently, they put on the lid

"No?" said the bishop naïvely, "nor I; but he might—eh? Suppose you put him in now; it's almost time, a minute and a half, I think."

Betty put him in, she smoothed his black head and gently, very gently, they put on the lid. An explosion of barks followed, the yellow hat-box fairly reeking with sound.

Miss Savile gazed blankly at the bishop and the bishop gazed blankly at her.

"Isn't it awful?" she gasped.

"It is," he affirmed solemnly, "it's almost equal to Manila."

Betty dropped to her knees and whispered to it, then she administered a sweet cracker. There was a slight cessation of sound, the gate numbered eighteen opened. Miss Savile reached for the hat-box and so did the bishop.

"My dear, permit me," he said, and grasped it firmly.

They passed the gate and approached the train together. The hat-box emitted curious but occasional sounds, still slightly toned down by mastication. A flush mounted to the old man's white hair and Betty's cheeks were crimson. The porter helped them aboard; their seats happened to be *vis-à-vis*. The bishop set down the yellow hat-box gently between them and took off his broad-brimmed hat; he even wiped his brow. Betty sat opposite—as yet they were the only occupants of the car—and a thought occurred to her.

"Do you know," she said suddenly, "we've committed a crime?"

"A what?" asked the bishop, startled.

"A felony—we've stolen a hat-box."

For a full minute they looked at each other—Dewey was finishing his cracker in stuffy seclusion—and you could have cut the silence with a knife.

"So we have," he admitted, "I never once thought of it!"

"Nor did I!" wailed Betty. "Who in the world do you suppose it belongs to?"

The bishop stooped and gingerly turned it around. It immediately emitted muffled but unmistakable sounds, and the two conspirators looked over their shoulders. Then the bishop put on his glasses.

"It has a monogram on it," he said, "'H. B. C.'"

Betty's face changed, her eyes dilated.

"Are you sure?" she gasped. "What—what do you suppose that stands for?"

"'C' stands for a good many things, I think," he replied mildly. "For instance, to our conscience, 'C' stands for crime, doesn't it? But then, my dear Miss Savile, it also stands for 'cream' and for 'Cupid.' 'H. B. C.," he added thoughtfully. "I have it!" His eyes twinkled. "'The Hat-Box of Cupid.'"

"Ye-es," said Betty absently, looking all the while at the hat-box with growing horror. "Do—do you think we'll be arrested?"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the bishop, "I hope not."

The car was beginning to fill—two stout dowagers and a sickly young man, an old gentleman and his wife, a pert school-girl with two pigtailed tied with black bows and an abnormal thirst which sent her at once to the water-cooler. Then entered a tall young man, with a determined face and a pair of honest blue eyes.

Miss Betty Savile, looking up from the fateful hat-box, saw him at the door. Without a word she rose from her seat and fled—fled wildly and pusillanimously—to the rear of the car, and dropping into the only vacant seat turned her back upon the world in the shape of the fine looking young man, who deposited his dress-suit case in the rack and sat down opposite the astonished Right Reverend.

But he did not look at the Right Reverend, nor did he look after Betty. He had not seen her. He looked, instead, at the yellow hat-box, at first indifferently, then curiously, and at last determinedly. Dewey dozed; the hat-box itself was ominously quiet.

"Beg pardon," said the tall young man, "is that your hat-box?"

The prelate turned vividly pink.

"At present," he replied, "it appears to be."

"Indeed!" said the newcomer politely. "Your initial, then, is 'C'?"

"My initial is 'W,'" said the Right

Reverend, with sudden firmness. "My name is Winterbourne."

"But your hat-box is marked 'H. B. C.'," observed the young man coldly. "Possibly—"

"I am the Bishop-Coadjutor of Minnesota," said the prelate hastily, "perhaps—"

"You should have had B. C. on the hat-box," retorted the other ironically; "I'm afraid you've made a mistake. That hat-box happens to be mine. My name is H. B. Cameron and it was stolen from me in the depot half an hour ago. Kindly hand it over."

"This hat-box belongs now to a young lady," said the bishop; "I must decline to give it up."

"A young lady?" Mr. Cameron laughed. "Really? Your white hair and your cloth entitle you to respect, my dear sir, but it's going a little far, isn't it? Do young ladies usually carry a man's hat-box—with his monogram on it?"

"I really am not sure," said the Right Reverend, his face like pink coral, "I'm not at all sure, but certainly this belongs at present to a young lady."

"In that case she can prove her property," retorted the young man flatly. "If it's hers, her hat must be in it; if it's mine, my hat is in it. I insist on opening it."

The bishop looked him firmly in the eye.

"I absolutely decline to open it," he said: "I even declare that it shall not be opened."

"Which, in itself, is suspicious," said Mr. Cameron promptly. "I demand that it be opened; *it's my hat-box and it contains my hat.*"

"I give you my word of honor," said the bishop eagerly, "my most sacred word of honor, that it doesn't!"

As he spoke the train slowed down for an unscheduled stop at Larchmont Manor. The young man laughed, an ironical laugh.

"Will you kindly open the hat-box?" he asked. He had heard of wolves in sheep's clothing before.

"No!" said the bishop sharply, tried beyond the bounds of patience, "I will

not open the hat-box—and, once for all, sir, it does not contain your hat! Far from it!"

"Then I will open it!" Mr. Cameron declared.

And good as his word he snatched up the hat-box and took off the cover.

There was a snap, a snarl, and a streak of black lightning tore squealing down the car. To Dewey, the opening of his prison meant liberty, but it also revealed the fact that he had been deserted, and seeing no familiar face he lifted his voice and wept; he also cut for the open, in answer to the call of his wild.

He dashed under the petticoats of a fat dowager, he nearly upset the school-girl on her way to the water-cooler, and plunging past his own mistress, gained the door and eluding the astonished porter, hurled himself upon the outside world. At the same moment Betty Savile was on her feet with a shriek of dismay.

"Oh, Dewey—Dewey!" she cried, and ran after him.

As she disappeared, young Cameron sprang up, dropping the despised hat-box, and made for the door, followed by the poor bishop, whose face, by now, had assumed a lively shade of purple.

Betty had already reached the platform, but Dewey was a mere speck in the dusty road, quite beyond the reach of her voice. In spite of that, however, she called again and again; then, dashing past the eager hackmen she ran down the road, forgetting her train, her luggage, and even the tall young man of the Pullman, in her distress. It was then that the young man stepped down on the platform, followed by the agitated prelate. They stood looking after the flying figure. The train whistled and rolled away.

"Oh, bless my soul!" gasped the bishop. He had even left his hat on board.

"This is a pretty piece of work!" retorted young Cameron fiercely. "How dared you steal Miss Savile's dog and my hat-box? I'd give you a thrashing for an impostor, if it weren't for your years, and I could spare the time, but I can't!"

And he also ran down the road.

The bishop stood stock-still and gazed, speechless. There was first the disappearing black speck, that was Dewey; then the flying young figure, graceful as Diana; and last the broad shouldered big one following at a pace that amazed

floating cloud behind; it caught her skirts and lifted them from a pair of daintily shod feet and slender ankles; it caught her marabou boa and swung it out over her shoulder; but on she sped, and on sped Dewey. Two motors passed,



"I'd give you a thrashing if I could spare the time"

the churchman. He stood in a dream, hatless, gazing.

Then the bishop went hastily into the station and looked for a telegraph-office; the next train was not due for two hours and a half.

Betty Savile ran wildly down the long road. It was a crisp autumn day and the wind blew straight from the Sound: it caught her veil and carried it out in a

a carriage, and a couple on horseback.

Betty did not look up but she felt their eyes as she ran. She ran until she dropped from sheer exhaustion beside the road. To the left was a hedge, in front the land sloped to the beach, and she saw blue waters; a shower of golden leaves fell from the maple overhead.

Dewey was gone.

Betty sat disconsolate, panting for

breath, her pretty face pale, and her eyes full of tears. Her poor little dog, poor little Dewey, she thought, and that hateful, stupid, old man, he must have let him out, he—

Her thoughts stopped and she gasped. The young man had arrived; and he was panting, too.

"Betty—Miss Savile — er — where's Dewey?" he exclaimed.

Betty's face hardened; she drew herself up and straightened her hat.

"Dewey has run away," she said tartly.

"I know, I'm so sorry, you—"

He met her eyes and stiffened himself.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Savile, that beggar in a ministerial get-up had stolen my hat-box, and then evidently stolen Dewey and put him in it. I claimed the box, you know, naturally opened it—and out hopped Dewey and—"

"You—you monster!" said Miss Savile suddenly. "You let Dewey out! That kind old man was helping me; I put Dewey in your hat-box!"

"You!"

There was a moment of speechless amazement.

"But what in the world did you do with my hat?" Then penitently, "Oh, I say, Betty, I'm awfully sorry; if I'd known I—"

Miss Savile rose.

"I think I told you I should never speak to you again," she said icily, "and now you—you accuse me of stealing your hat! You've made me lose my dear little dog! Henry Cameron, I—I hate you!"

And Betty promptly burst into tears.

"Betty!" He tried to take her hand. "Betty, don't! Oh! come—let me speak—I—"

"I tell you I—I hate you!" she sobbed. "I want Dewey—you've let Dewey out—he'll starve—he'll die of a broken-heart—he—it's all your fault! I believe you did it on purpose!" she cried, in a *crescendo* of grief.

Young Cameron turned from red to white and stood looking at her. Then he squared his shoulders.

"You know that's not so, Miss Savile," he said tartly. "You're unjust—

unkind—unfair—but," he picked up the hat he had dropped beside her on the bank, "I'll find Dewey and bring him back. Then we'll cry quits!"

Betty choked a sob in her throat.

"You can't," she said freezingly.

"I will!" he retorted and went.

Then Betty, feeling that she had lost all on one throw, leaned back against the maple tree and wept.

She was there a long time; it seemed to her almost an hour, and the thin thread of hope grew thinner. The poor little dog was lost, of course, and lost in a strange place: he might really starve to death or be devoured by savage beasts; Betty's imagination kindled with new horrors. As for Harry Cameron—she bit her lip—why had she ever spoken to him again? They had quarreled bitterly, irrevocably, and she had only just heard that he was going to be married. Miss Savile sat up very straight and stiff among the leaves and dried her tears; he would live to regret it, she thought, that was one comfort!

Then she discovered that she had lost the heel off one of her shoes. It was gone, and she was sitting on the ground at Larchmont Manor with only one good shoe and no bag and no purse, for all her belongings were whirling away on the train going east. A terrible sensation overwhelmed her; she felt like a mariner marooned on a desert island, and her heart quaked at the thought that she must appeal to her enemy for aid, or remain seated indefinitely upon the highroad. Her face turned vividly crimson and her eyes filled with tears. Seated she would remain, if she died for it! But, oh, poor little black Dewey!

Then she looked up and saw Henry Cameron coming up the road with a small black ball under his arm. She was speechless, the young man was also speechless, but he deposited Dewey in her lap. Then he took out his handkerchief and carefully dusted his clothes; he even picked some brambles off his formerly immaculate trousers.

Meanwhile Betty had found her voice.

"Thank you," she said stiffly, "I—I'm much obliged. I'd quite given up. Where—when—how did you get Dewey?"



Betty caught her breath. "Who got it, then?"

"I cornered him in a hen-house," Cameron replied dryly, picking off some feathers. "He's killed half a dozen chicks, the hen was fighting him."

"Oh!" said Betty.

"I got him," continued the young man, with some bitterness, "I also got something else."

"Not—not the hen, I hope," Betty rejoined feebly.

"No—only a blessing from a sharp-featured female who owned the hen."

"I'm sorry. I'm afraid you hate Dewey."

"On the contrary I adore him."

"Oh!" then coldly. "I suppose you think that's funny."

He made no reply, but he looked down at the limp figure on the bank of leaves, at the droop of the pretty head under the disheveled hat, at the flush on the smooth cheek, at the hand that trembled as it caressed Dewey.

"Are you going on by the next train?" he asked at last.

"No."

"Are you going back to New York?"

"No."

"Are you going to wait at the station?"

"No."

Cameron shut his mouth tightly.

If she meant this as a final snub she was, at least, ungrateful. He had fairly done his best and might turn his back on her now and leave her, yet—

"Are you going to the trolley?"

"I'm going to walk."

"What?"

"I'm going to walk," firmly.

"You can't, it's eighteen miles, and you've lost the heel off one of your shoes."

Betty drew the tell-tale foot out of sight.

"I'm going to walk," she said flatly.

"You can't—without a heel."

"I can; I'm going alone."

"So I supposed."

Betty reddened. "You needn't wait," frigidly.

"I shall."

"You'd better not; Miss Phillips may need you."

"She can wait."

Betty bit her lip and was silent, caressing Dewey.

"Miss Savile."

No answer.

"Will you kindly explain—"

"About the hat-box?" haughtily.

"No!" sharply. "Do you suppose I'd ask?"

"I should think you would."

"I believe I'm usually considered a gentleman."

Silence.

He commenced to walk up and down. The sun was setting, a beautiful light filled the upper sky; a shower of golden leaves fell softly, fluttering and turning and glowing like a shower of coins from the gold of Midas; the salt of the sea was in the air, the blood red banners of the sumac waved by the roadside. Presently he stopped in front of her.

"Betty," he said, "Betty, why did you turn me down last year?"

"I'm going to walk to New York," she said irrelevantly.

"In those shoes?"

"I don't care; one heel is better than none."

He took out his watch.

"It's a quarter to six; it will be dark soon and you'd better take me along."

"What will Miss Phillips say?"

"Miss Phillips be—be translated."

"I heard you were going to be married."

"Indeed!"

"You went to see her that day I sent for you."

"Betty, I never got your letter."

Betty caught her breath, her eyes dilated. "Who got it, then?"

"Your aunt; I just found out about it."

"Aunt Tait?"

"Yes."

"And she kept it?"

"Because she wanted you to marry your cousin."

"How dared she?"

Betty got up and and stood lamely, clasping Dewey.

"There comes a cab," he said, and hailed it. "I'm going to take you back to the station."

Betty's face blazed. "It wont do any

good," she said, "I—I left my purse on the train."

He helped her into the cab.

"I fancy I can get you back to New York," he said dryly, "if you'll explain why—"

"Why I took the hat-box?" she said hastily. "It was empty—it rolled under our feet—the dear old bishop—"

"I say, is that old chap really a bishop?" He looked aghast, remembering his last words with him.

"Really and truly, the Bishop-Coadjutor of Minnesota."

"Oh, Gee!"

"We picked it up and we put Dewey in. The thief must have taken your hat and thrown away the box."

"Of course! I was an ass, I—" He stammered, red with recollection.

"Did—did you think I was a kleptomaniac?" Betty groaned.

He turned to her and forgot the bishop, his face kindled with love and hope, quite a new strong hope.

"I think you are the woman I love," he said. "Betty, have you forgiven me?"

Her head drooped lower, he only saw a red cheek under the brim of that audacious hat. Dewey was asleep on her

arm, dreaming of the hen-house and lump sugar.

"Harry," she whispered, "do you really?"

"With all my heart!" he declared rapturously.

Then the cab stopped, the cabman jumped down and opened the door. Harry got out blushing, radiant, and helped out Betty and the somnolent Dewey. On the platform the bishop was still waiting; some one had lent him a hat. He saw them coming and read their story on their faces; his eyes twinkled and he smiled. He forgot the troubles of the last hour, he even forgave a little black Pomeranian with a whole heartedness that was worthy of his profession.

"My dear bishop," Betty said, "I've got Dewey! Let me present Mr. Cameron."

"My dear sir," Harry said, "I beg your pardon a thousand times; I've heard all about it, that—that blessed hat-box—"

The bishop held out his hand, his dear old face was as genial as a summer sky.

"Ah," he said, "my dear children, I see—it *was* the 'Hat Box of Cupid!'"

Cowards Twain

BY E. A. WHARTON

ILLUSTRATED BY BLANCHE V. FISHER

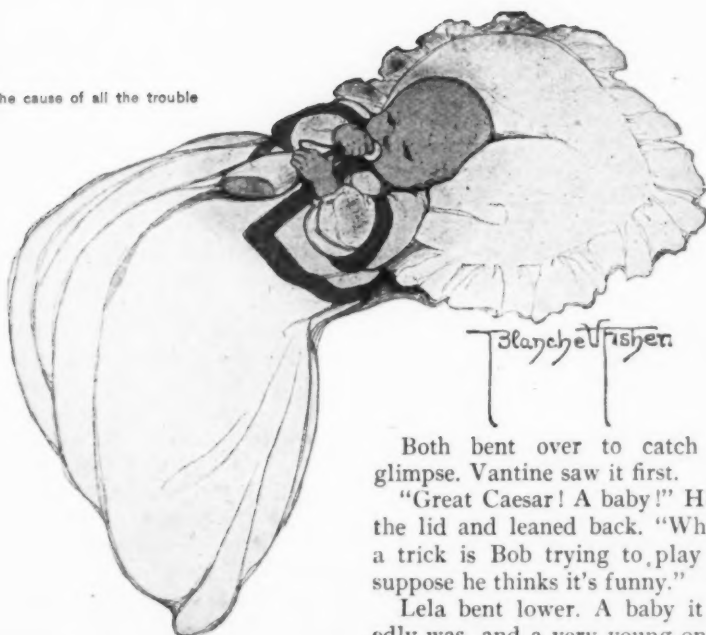
BRUCE VANTINE and Lela, his wife, were indolently surveying from their Pullman state-room the gorgeous coloring of the sunset sky, and speculating as to where on that waste of sand and sage-brush was the mining camp in which Bob Alexander was earning his spurs as a mining engineer. Bob had been Vantine's roommate at college, and it was he who introduced Bruce to his cousin, Lela McTigue. So they were paying him the tribute of a passing thought on this, the final stage of their wedding journey.

Suddenly they sat erect and leaned

forward to watch a scarlet motor-car that shot out of the dusty haze and swung into the highway that paralleled the railroad. For a short distance the car kept pace with the heavy train, then with derisive waving from the occupants, forged ahead. One figure of the half-dozen seemed familiar, and when it snatched off cap and goggles they recognized Bob.

"That's the stage from camp," grinned the porter. "One of 'em meets every through train. Reckon they must a-had an accident; they'd a-missed us if we hadn't been late."

The cause of all the trouble



As the train stopped, Bob bounded up the steps, carrying a straw telescope-basket.

"Thought we'd missed you sure," he panted. "Pure luck we didn't. This train hasn't been late for two weeks. Let me set this basket down somewhere. It's just a little surprise for you; don't open it till I'm gone. Now tell me about yourselves. Has the honeymoon begun to wane? Remember I've only ten minutes respite from that," he made a comprehensive gesture toward the outer world, "so talk fast."

Bruce and Lela stood on the rear platform till Bob's figure vanished and the station was only a blur on the horizon. As they returned to their state-room they sighed comfortably over Bob's evident loneliness and homesickness, and told each other how like him it was to contrive a pleasure for them under such inauspicious conditions.

Bruce placed the bag on the seat opposite and unbuckled the straps.

"Wait a minute," Lela begged. "Let's guess what it is. I guess — Indian baskets."

Vantine lifted the basket.

"Um-m. Might be specimens, though it's hardly heavy enough for that. I guess Indian blankets. Now for it."

Both bent over to catch the first glimpse. Vantine saw it first.

"Great Caesar! A baby!" He dropped the lid and leaned back. "What sort of a trick is Bob trying to play on us? I suppose he thinks it's funny."

Lela bent lower. A baby it undoubtedly was, and a very young one at that; not more than a month old at the outside. It had evidently been carefully prepared for the journey. The bottom of the basket had been furnished as a bed, and around the sides, pockets and straps held all essentials for its comfort.

It was sound asleep. Lela dropped on her knees and put out her hand to stroke the pink-rose-leaf cheek, but her husband drew her back.

"Don't touch it!" he cried in a panic. "It'll wake up and cry. If we can only keep it quiet till we get to the next station we can ship it back to him. If it's a joke, it's an infernally poor one."

"Ship it back!" Mrs. Vantine's eyes were very big and very blue, and her voice shook. "To lie all night at that station and be carried fifty miles across that dusty plain? You wouldn't treat a dog so, much less a child! And it isn't a joke. You know Bob wouldn't do a thing like that."

Vantine's face softened. He had forgotten, in his annoyance, the baby's side of the problem. Of course it musn't suffer. He tiptoed to the door, closed it, and drew the heavy curtain close. The windows giving up the passage were already shaded. He laughed a little shamefacedly as he knelt beside his wife and put his arm around her.

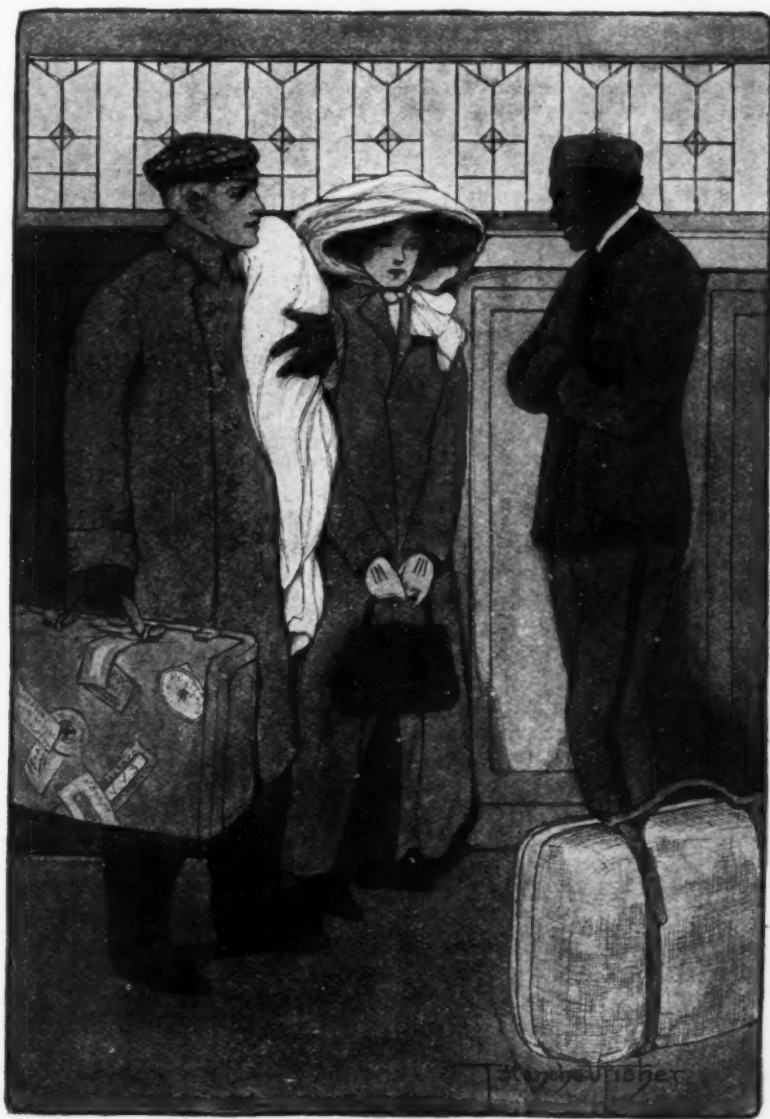
"Forgive me, dear. I really didn't mean to abuse the baby. Let's see what we can find out about the youngster."

A letter was pinned to the pocket that contained the nursing bottle. It began with an apology for the manner of foisting the child upon them.

But I was afraid you wouldn't take him if you knew, and he simply *had* to go. You think it's hard lines for

you, but it's nothing to what the baby's facing. Its mother died the day it was born, and three days ago its father was crushed by a fall of rock.

I promised the man I'd look after the child and send it East to his parents, and you'll have to make the best of it. There may not be another chance for months, and the doctor says it can't stand the altitude that long. I've written the folks, and if you'll wire them, they'll meet you in Rochester and take it off your hands.



A judicious interview resulted in finding two chairs

Here followed an address and all directions for preparing the condensed milk, cans of which were provided.

I never supposed condensed milk was the approved diet for babies, but this one seems to thrive on it, which is a mercy, as there isn't a cow within fifty miles. The doctor says it's perfectly safe to keep the lid on the basket for an hour or so at a time, with the extra holes I've made, so you can carry him that way if it's more convenient.

The woman that's been taking care of him—the only decent one beside his mother that's ever been in this camp—gave him soothing-syrup when he had colic, and says it won't hurt him if used according to directions—and she's buried six, besides having four left. I have my doubts, but I gave him a dose after he screamed till I thought he'd burst his lungs and I'd done every thing else I knew how. And I've put in the bottle.

Lela was crying openly, and Vantine wiped his eyes before folding the letter.

Beyond question the baby would be cared for till he reached Rochester.

Regardless of the fact that neither of them knew anything of the specific needs of infancy, and the more disquieting fact that they would be the laughing-stock of their friends should the story leak out, Babe should be served with his condensed milk at suitable intervals, together with such other attendance as he might require.

A waiter passed down the aisle shouting: "Last call for supper."

The basket was placed far back on the seat for safety and with much misgiving they entered the dining-car, hoping that the child would sleep till their return. It did. Indeed, they grew extremely anxious lest Bob's soothing-syrup had been measured too liberally.

At the first squirm, Mrs. Vantine caught it up and laid its cheek against her own. Vantine put a pillow behind her and drew up a suit-case for her feet; the wee bald head nestled into the hollow of her arm and the lips closed greedily on the feeding-bottle. While it choked and gurgled itself back to dreamland, they discussed the situation. They agreed that no one except the porter need be taken into their confidence, and perhaps, even

that could be avoided. Hot water for mixing its food might be obtained on pretext of shaving.

The baby's basket had been set close to the window, and they were almost ready to retire when Lela discovered that there was not sufficient prepared milk for the night. Vantine looked at his watch. It was 10:45. The porter would think he was crazy, but there was no help for it.

"Hot water—for a shave? Why, boss—"

A silver dollar found his palm.

"Why, yes, boss. I reckon I can get it at the next stop."

It really wasn't necessary, he reflected, to remind the gentleman that he had been shaved just after dinner that day.

The night was uneventful. Baby woke several times, and once cried vigorously, but the engine was screaming at the same time. It woke at an inconvenient hour in the morning, too, and breakfast was delayed while the infant was crooned to sleep. More hot water was needed. Another shave was out of the question, and Vantine used his handkerchief vigorously as he confided to his wife—in the porter's presence—that a hot lemonade was the best thing he knew to break up a cold. Abundant hot water was forthcoming, but the porter's suspicions were aroused.

"Bet them folks got a puppy or something in that telescope," he said to the porter of the next car. "When folks act square I'm blind as a bat, but you just watch me find out when I dust them out."

There was a certain familiarity, not to say insolence, in his manner that afternoon that should have put them on their guard. They were driven to the use of soothing-syrup for the first time, and at supper-time the child was still sleeping.

When they returned, a pleasant-faced woman was in the state-room with the baby across her knees, patting and jolting it in the most approved manner. The little limbs were contracted, and the babe was screaming at the top of its lungs.

The woman rose at their entrance.

"I couldn't bear to hear the baby cry," she apologized, holding it toward Lela.

That young woman sank into a seat and hugged the baby close.



It was a long letter and began with
an apology

"Oh, baby, dear, what shall I do for you?" she cried. "You poor, poor darling!"

She rocked back and forth, her own tears falling on the small head.

The older woman smiled sympathetically.

"Don't you do that, my dear. It's only colic. This is evidently your first. I know it's hard to see the darling suffer, but it isn't dangerous. But, my child, why do you feed your child that dreadful condensed milk?"

Vantine was obtrusively rearranging the luggage.

At the first words Lela had straight-

Blanche Fisher

ened with a start that almost dropped the child.

"It's not our baby!" she exclaimed. "I—"

"Not yours? Then what—?"

Mrs. Vantine turned the child over and bent over it.

"We're taking him East for a friend," she explained. "Both his parents are dead and he is going to his grandparents."

"Oh! Is it a boy?"

Lela stammered. The masculine pronoun had been used unadvisedly following Bob's letter.

Vantine broke in.

"Fine little chap, isn't he? Hope his grandparents will appreciate him."

When at length the child was quieted, the stranger withdrew amid expressions of gratitude. The Vantines had learned several things about babies and were somewhat chastened by the experience. Mrs. Vantine leaned back in the corner nearest the window with the babe cuddled close and a Madonna look on her weary face. Her husband watched the play of light and shade on the pale gold hair and vaguely resented her absorption in the tiny stranger on her breast.

The train halted and the platform swarmed with newsboys shouting:

"Last edition! All about the kidnapping of Millionaire Smeltem's baby!"

Vantine threw up the window and bought a copy. At a gesture from his wife, he seated himself where they could both scan the page. With one impulse they turned to each other. Mrs. Vantine spoke first.

"You don't suppose—"

Vantine interrupted.

"Impossible! We feel conspicuous, having this infant on our hands, and imagine every one is watching us."

His tone was argumentative rather than convincing.

Mrs. Vantine laid the baby in its basket and placed a paper between it and the light. Then without speaking she laid her finger on a paragraph:

A child of the same age and general description has been discovered on board the Overland Flyer in possession of a man and a woman who pass as husband and wife. It was artfully concealed, but a sagacious porter—

And so on.

With a glance at her husband's face she collapsed in a gale of laughter.

"Oh, Bruce, don't look so tragic," she gasped. "What a tale this will be for our grandchildren!"

His face relaxed a trifle.

"No doubt it will be funny at that distance," he groaned, "but just now it's

confoundedly awkward. Do you suppose that woman suspected anything? She looked queer when you said it wasn't ours, and you remember her asking if it was a boy."

Lela shook her head.

"She didn't know about the other baby then."

"She might. It was in the morning paper but with less expansive headlines."

"And because Bob called it 'he' we've kept on; but, you know, it's a girl."

"No! And I called it a 'fine little chap!' Of course she suspects! And there's a big reward offered for the child and another for the abductors. Oh, we're in for it! There'll be detectives and reporters, and we'll figure in red headlines with our pictures on the front page. We've simply got to do something. Where's that porter?"

The black man's response was prompt. Vantine motioned him in, closed the door and stood with his back against it.

"Now," he began, pointing to the paragraph, "what do you know of this?"

The negro's face grayed.

"Me, boss? What should I know?"

"A 'sagacious porter' gave the information, and it happens to describe us. How did you find the baby? No lies, mind."

The man squirmed. "I was just a-lookin'—to see if you had a dog. You-all's so mighty pertic'lar with that basket, an' the hot water and all. And it's 'gainst the rules—"

"Ah, tampering with passengers' luggage!"

He wrote in a small note-book. "And you immediately jumped to the conclusion that we had stolen her, eh? and sent your telegram?"

More squirming.

"You cain't say it didn't look suspicious, boss; keepin' her hid that a-way."

"Precisely. That was a mistake on our part. Now I'm going to tell you the exact truth, and you can believe it or not."

He briefly repeated the essential facts.

"Now," he said, "you don't know me, but you do know my uncle."

He mentioned a prominent officer of the road.

"What chance will you have if I complain of you and ask for your discharge?"

The negro did not reply.

Vantine spoke again, more gently. "Have you a family?"

The drooping shoulders squared themselves proudly.

"Got a girl in the normal school. She'll graduate next June. That is, if—My boy's in a dental college in Chicago. I'm bound to give 'em a chance."

"Indeed. You'd like to do more for them, no doubt?"

A bill fluttered to the floor.

"Now, I wish you'd remember a thing or two. In the first place, if anybody asks you, my name is Bruce. You saw it on our luggage." He covered the surname.

"And we're from—Calcutta, India. Leave the rear door of this car unlocked and keep away unless we ring."

The man demurred. "I daresn't leave the door unlocked, boss. The rules—"

Vantine smiled.

"Yes, the rules? Anyone may overlook a trifle like that in a lifetime, you know. I depend on you. We'd like our berths made up now."

As the door closed behind the porter, Mrs. Vantine turned to her husband. The laughter had gone from her eyes.

"Well?"

"We'll drop off at the first station where there's a railroad crossing this and take the next train out. Then we'll double on our tracks and get in home before they know where we are. We'll have to leave the baby's basket and pass him—I mean her—off as our own."

Lela's face grew scarlet. "Oh, please, not that!"

Bruce silenced her with a kiss.

"It's the only way, sweetheart. We'd be suspected in a minute if we told the truth."

"Wouldn't it be better to—"

"Face the music? Not if we can help it, and I think we can."

A south-bound train stood at the crossing when the Overland stopped, and while the officials were busy forward, and the men with torches and hammers were peering at and tapping wheels and bearings, the Vantines dropped off the

dark side of the rear platform and made their stumbling way to the other train.

The conductor was politely regretful, but there was not a berth to be had—not even an upper tourist. There were a few seats in the smoker, but that was all. A judicious interview with the chair-car porter resulted in "finding" two chairs whose occupants were transferred to the smoker. Still Vantine fumed over the discomfort of Lela and the baby, and ended by taking all the pillows the porter had left and tucking them about his wife, building up a soft bed for the baby between her and the wall. Then he sat bolt upright beside them and glowered.

He raged inwardly at his own folly, at the Overland porter, at Bob Alexander, and at the selfishness of a man who would take his wife to such a place as Bob described, and to the senseless devotion of the woman herself. Then he stopped. He knew that Lela would go with him to the desert of Sahara or the North Pole, and he knew, too, that if she lifted her face to his and pleaded with the look she sometimes wore, his strength and judgment would be as water.

In the chill of the early morning, he covered them with his overcoat as they slept, and went to the smoking-car.

When he returned a strong-armed, capable looking woman was dandling the baby and talking to Lela. She glanced up as he approached.

"Here's your husband. Baby favors him most, don't it? I can't see as it looks a mite like you."

She gently stroked the fuzz that was beginning to show on the wee head.

"I shouldn't wonder if its hair is like yours, though."

The woman's face was bent over the child. Lela lifted appealing eyes to her husband, then snatched the baby and buried her face in its dress. The older woman smiled indulgently.

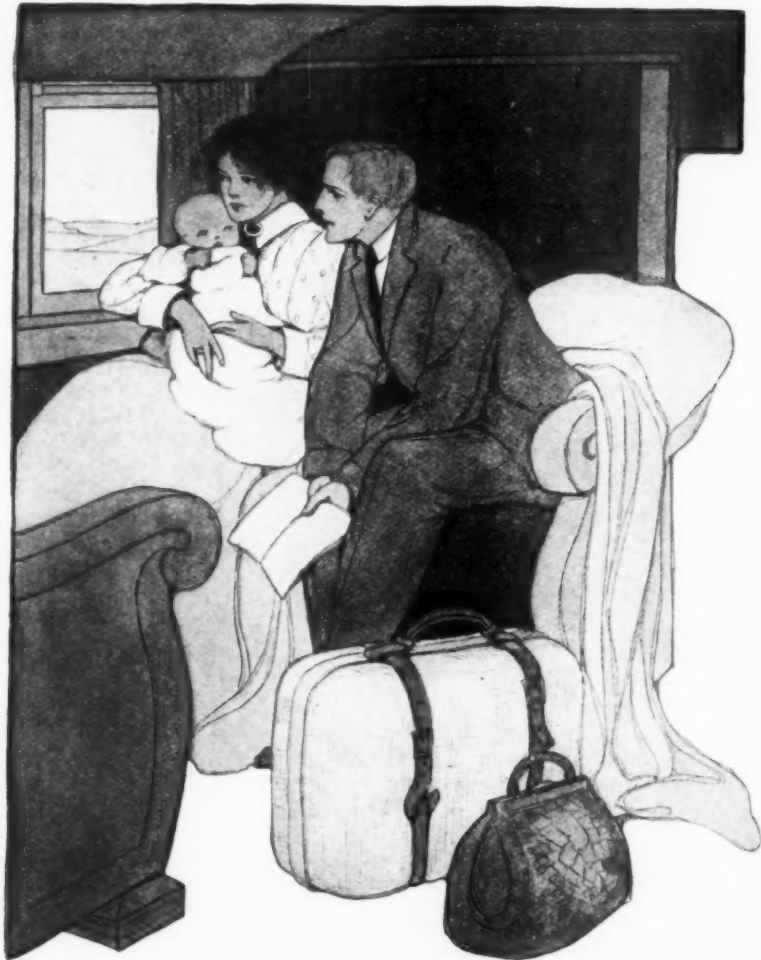
"Can't bear it out of your arms a minute, can you? I was just that foolish over my first. You'll get over it by the time you've had eight, as I have. I get off at the next stop. Good-by."

The conversation—or monologue—had been conducted in a tone audible to

every one in the vicinity, and as Vantine dropped into the vacated seat he writhed under their sharply focused attention while he leaned over Lela and the baby and tried to play the part of fond father.

Lela explained, "and besides," dimpling, "we may want to carry her in it before we get home."

They made no attempt at concealment beyond staying in their state-room and



The Vantines had learned several things about babies

Blanche Fisher

They reached Wichita during the forenoon, and in the afternoon he and baby stayed in their room at the hotel while Lela shopped. A complete baby-outfit and a telescope-basket containing a down pillow were purchased.

"She's safe there from draughts or bumping against the side of the berth,"

having their meals served there. Lela grew wan and anxious-eyed under the strain, and Bruce chafed at his helplessness. When they changed cars at Cleveland they resorted to the basket again. The danger of meeting acquaintances was increasing.

As the time for surrendering the little

one approached, Mrs. Vantine grew dis-trait. She held it in her arms or hung over its basket till her husband became annoyed.

"No, of course I don't want to keep it, not really," she replied to his half-jesting comments. "But I never had anything to do with a baby before. Sister's were always barricaded with nurses, and I've grown fond of the mite. Why can't we take it to its grandparents' home instead of asking them to meet us in Rochester."

Bruce reflected.

That would take an extra day, at best, but it would lessen the probability of meeting people they knew. And besides—he smiled at himself for the admission—he'd like to see the child in its new home. There might be things they could do for it. To be sure they were interested, having been so intimately associated with its life. And if things didn't go well with it, they'd take it home with them yet.

As the one daily train to Treville had gone, they secluded themselves in a lodging-house, going to restaurants for meals, carrying the baby in its basket, with sufficient other luggage to convey the impression that they were on their way to or from a train.

When they went to the train, as on previous occasions, Vantine kept the telescope in his own hands and entrusted the remainder of the luggage to porters. As he was assisting Lela from the cab, who should appear but Stanton, the wit of the club, whose keen sense of the ridiculous and his power to make others see with his eyes made him at once admired and feared.

In the midst of greetings a porter appeared, the cabman was paid, and they made their way together through the crowds.

"Going to Treville?" Stanton exclaimed. "What luck! I'm going to Presley, first stop this side, to visit my aunt. We've no time to spare."

There was difficulty in finding seats, and before they were fully settled the train was moving. The porter dropped the bags and sprang off as Vantine threw him a coin.

Lela gave a bewildered look around.

"Oh, Bruce," she cried, grasping his arm "where's the ba—the basket?"

Vantine went white. "I don't know! Good heavens! Yes, I do. I left it in the cab. Stop the train."

He leaped for the bell-rope, but Stanton caught his shoulder and thrust him into the seat.

"Don't be a fool. Was the basket stuffed with diamonds or bank-notes?" His tone was sarcastic. "You can telegraph and have it forwarded on the next train. Do you remember the cab number? Most of the men are honest."

Lela wrung her hands. "But there isn't another train till tomorrow!"

Stanton stared in frank amazement.

"Well, it will keep till to-morrow, wont it?" he hazarded.

"Keep? It'll be dead! It's a ba— Oh, Bruce, how could we be so careless!" she sobbed, hiding her face on his arm.

Stanton still looked puzzled. A dog, eh? Too precious to trust to the baggage-car. He thought Lela had more sense. And Bruce seemed as cut up as she. Queer world!

Vantine's carefully worded telegram brought no result. He did not remember the cab number, and police-headquarters replied that no such article had been reported, but they would try to trace it if full description was sent.

In the meantime other telegrams had been sent, one to the conductor of their train. And his reply caused still others, and activity in certain quarters. When the half-distracted Vantines debarked they received a surprising welcome.

A sad-eyed elderly pair started forward, but turned dejectedly away.

"I guess they missed the train, wife," the old man said.

Bruce sprang toward them to explain, but an officer touched his shoulder.

"You're under arrest."

At the same instant he was seized from behind.

"I'll trouble you to open them suit-cases, young man. You've given us a fine chase, but we've got you now."

Vantine stared from one officer to the other, and turned to his wife.

"You'd better go to the hotel, dear, and wait for me there. I'll—"

"Not on your life!" ejaculated the local man, and the other echoed: "Well, I guess not. We want her, too."

"But what's the charge?" Vantine insisted.

"Tell you when we get to the city jail. Come along, now."

"Better make 'em open up the suitcases here," the other urged. "That kid will be smothered, if it aint already."

The first speaker stood aghast.

"Kid! They aint got no kid. Left it in Rochester. That's what I want 'em for. Desertion of an infant babe's a mighty serious misdemeanor."

Light began to dawn on the Vantines.

"Oh, do you know where the dear baby is?" Lela cried. "And is it safe?"

"I don't know exactly where it is, but I reckon it's a heap safer than it was with you."

"Wish you'd ask those old folks to step along with us," Vantine said. "They may be interested. Thank heaven Stanton isn't here," he whispered as they ascended the steps.

An automobile whirled up to the door and a man leaped out, followed by a uniformed nurse who carried the telescope-basket, with the top set up to shield the child.

"Have you caught them?" the detective asked as he entered the room. "It's the most heartless—"

"Ah," as he caught sight of the Vantines, "are these the people? Most remarkable!"

Lela had snatched the child and was half smothering it with kisses. The others were silent. At length Vantine spoke.

"It does seem rather remarkable. My wife seems surprisingly glad to see the child that we are charged with first stealing and then deserting. Perhaps you'll let me tell you the story."

He told it frankly, omitting no absurd

detail, and showed Bob's letter. The old people corroborated part of the story and accepted the remainder. The Eastern men were satisfied, but the one who had been trailing them from beyond the Rockies was dubious.

"A very plausible story," he admitted, "but what about Millionaire Smeltem's baby?"

The Rochester detective whirled.

"It's found. News came just before I started. It's never been out of California."

In the sad pleasure of greeting their dead son's child, the old people had forgotten everyone else. The officers held a conversation in a corner of the room. The man from Rochester approached Mr. and Mrs. Vantine. It was with difficulty that he kept a sober face.

"We've made rather a mess of things," he said, "and I can't see that it's altogether our fault. However, just to show that you bear no malice, suppose we shake hands. There's no hotel here," he continued, "and no train to-night. I have some friends that I'd like to visit, and, if you like, you may go back in the machine—that is, if you'll take the nurse. She can sit in front with the chauffeur."

It was twilight when the big car left the village. The young people on the rear seat reclined wearily on the cushions. They felt as Atlas might had his load been suddenly removed and a trifle dizzy with the whirl of events. Bruce put out his arm and drew Lela to him. Neither spoke.

By and by the chauffeur turned.

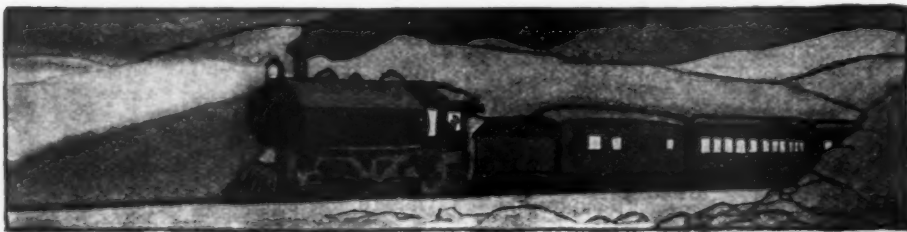
"I'm afraid we can't make that midnight train, sir, the car isn't going well."

"It doesn't matter," Bruce replied.

Lela stirred sleepily. "No, it doesn't matter," she echoed. "It's just us now."

And Bruce laughed as he repeated:

"Just us. Glory be!"



J. E. Dodson as
Sir John Cotswold
in J. Hartley Manners'
comedy, "The House
Next Door"

Photograph by Hall,
New York



SOME DRAMAS OF THE DAY

by
Louis V. De Foe

AS I watch the panorama of the passing show with its strange, unexpected successes and its bitter, inexplicable failures, I often wonder what it is, after all, that people most demand of that uncertain institution which we know as the theatre.

Not always merit; for plays that clearly prove their worth sometimes fail. Nor sensation. Recall the dispatch with which audiences prick the iridescent bubbles of extravagant fancy. Nor moral tonics. Watch how often dramatic preachments fall upon deaf ears. Nor merely entertainment. I remember scores of good entertainments which have won unjust reputations as consummate bores.

What is it, then, that the public most

demands? There is one answer, Pickwickian though it be. It's "Something different." Whatever the rising curtain may disclose the cry is always the same. "Something different!"

The loom of the dramatic season is beginning to whirl more slowly. The theatrical fabric of the year is almost spun. Even in New York, at the source of the stage's activities, has come the usual spring-time tendency to be a little moderate in our expectations. We have entered the vernal period of complacency. We are in a mood to be thankful for whatever the waning season may be pleased to spread before us.

When it was least expected, the "something different," for which we have re-

pined throughout the year, has arrived. In three of the half-dozen new plays which I am setting out to describe may be detected the invigorating tonic of real novelty. They are not those old ideas in new disguises to which we are so well accustomed, but fresh and breezy oddities born of a new point of view. This trio of little comedies, so unlike, so apart from the overworked conventionalities of the footlights, have proved a boon to the year's fag-end. Their effect has been to prolong the interest in the theatre and strengthen its competition against more seasonable entertainments. And tardy as has been their arrival, they are sure to rank enviably in the record of the year's endeavor.

Perhaps the cleverest of the trio—surely it is the best in point of acting, for it has that fertile artist, Mr. J. E. Dodson, in its leading rôle—is "The House Next Door." To hint that it is a drama of racial prejudice, dealing with the conflict of Gentile against Jew, might seem to imply that it is serious in theme. But nothing could be more remote from its real temper, since its effect is almost entirely humorous. Furthermore, although of German source, it has been adapted to conditions of London life with such uniform tact, by Mr. J. Hartley Manners, that it cannot possibly cause offense to either of the peoples which its story affects.

Sir John Cotswold, who is subjugated before the story ends, is an aged, irascible old English baronet, puffed to bursting with the pride of birth. His title has descended to him through a long line of ancestors, and he watches with bitter hatred and splenetic wrath the steady advance to commercial, social, and political importance of the people whom he has spent his narrow life villifying and detesting. This hatred has become an obsession in his dotage, but until the play begins, Jewish aggressions have not affected his domestic life.

You make the acquaintance of *Sir John* on the morning after his son has won his first great success as an operasinger. While the rest of the family is celebrating *Cecil's* triumph, *Sir John* storms about the breakfast-room, making his household miserable by his unreason-

able temper, first upbraiding them for their noise and laughter and then berating them for their silence. *Cecil's* floral tributes of the night before especially stir his ire, and his rage knows no bounds when he catches up a wreath and discovers that it is the gift of his hated Jewish neighbor, *Sir Isaac Jacobson*, a parliament member who has just been raised to the baronetcy.

Sir John is soon to experience a greater shock, for he is to learn that his son's musical education was acquired largely through *Sir Isaac's* generosity. In fact, he is almost wholly within *Sir Isaac's* power, if the latter chose to exert it. For, as *Sir Isaac* has risen in the world, old *Sir John* has steadily declined. He is occupying a mansion, the rent for which he cannot pay, on the Cotswold estate, which has fallen into *Sir Isaac's* possession, and he is otherwise under obligation to *Sir Isaac* for every comfort of his declining years—*Sir Isaac*, whose father was once a poor chairmaker on the Cotswold estate. Bah!

So the old martinet storms about, snapping out his prejudice against all Jews. His eye rests upon a portrait of Disraeli. "A Jew!" As he turns away in disgust his hand touches the cover of a book—"The Children of the Ghetto," by Israel Zangwill—"another Jew!" On the piano is a sheet of music. It is the "Prelude" by Rubinstein — "another Jew!" In anger he picks up a cigaret. The box bears the name of a Jewish firm and he dashes it into the fireplace. And then—worst insult of all—a telegram comes bringing a splendid offer to his son to sing in New York. *Sir John* glances at the signature, and his wrath knows no bounds. "Hammerstein!"

Until now, old *Sir John* has been spared the shock of knowing that his son and daughter are preparing to marry the corresponding members of his hated neighbor's family. The news reaches him simultaneously with the arrival of a letter making *Cecil* a handsome offer to sing at an entertainment in *Sir Isaac's* house. A *Cotswold* sing for a *Jacobson* and at a price! At last the most outrageous insult of all.

The old baronet siezes his gloves and stick and stamps away to pour the vials



Photograph by Hall, New York
O. J. Hendon, J. E. Dodson, William J. Kelley, Ruth Chester, and Mabel Roebuck in J. Hartley Manners' comedy, "The House Next Door"



Photograph by Hall, New York
Regan Hughston, Jeffreys Lewis, Thomas Findlay, and Fania Marinoff in J. Hartley Manners' new comedy, "The House Next Door"

of his sulphuric wrath upon this upstart who has dared to consider himself an equal of the *Cotswolds*. Prepare yourself now for a thunder-clap, for *Sir John* is about to hear also his children's matrimonial intentions from their own lips.

The subsequent scene is laid in the house of the *Jacobsons*. *Sir Isaac* stands in vivid contrast to his tormentor. He is considerate, generous, and gentle, a man who has risen to importance through the finest of natural endowments. His mind is as broad as his shoulders, and his head is filled with rugged good sense. His wife, far from being his equal, is a social climber, and it is without the knowledge of her husband that she has offered *Sir John* the gratuitous insult of sending a check for *Cecil's* services at her musicale.

Sir John ignores his neighbor's apologies for *Lady Jacobson's* tactless offer, spurns his other conciliatory advances, and drives his son and daughter back to their home. Then he heaps outrageous insults upon *Sir Isaac*, continuing his criminations until he, himself, is courteously shown the door.

Back in his own mansion the old baronet makes a vain attempt to raise money to cancel the obligations incurred without his consent. But nothing is left to pawn. In consternation he learns that the name of *Cotswold*, with all of its proud inheritances of social distinction, is not capable of realizing a penny. His anger changes to mortification now. He is told that his children are determined to marry in spite of opposition. Then he draws in his horns and makes a last pitiful appeal. If they must unite with the detested family next door, let it be delayed until after his death, when he can no longer feel the sting of this uttermost disgrace.

Now it is time for the children to reflect. They decide that their first duty is allegiance to their aged parent and they go next door to explain. *Lady Cotswold* learns of their intention and she, too, goes next door. *Sir John*, entering at this juncture, is told by the butler where his family has gone, and he jumps to the natural conclusion that his appeal has been ignored.

So the bitter old baronet is left alone to his reflections. In his solitude he recalls

the many considerations he has received at *Sir Isaac's* hands. The very house in which he lives is an evidence of his neighbor's generosity. The portrait of Disraeli reminds him of a proud page in England's history. Zangwill's book—"Dammé, I'll read it!" he snaps. Then, there is that princely offer from Hammerstein. He thinks again of the overdue rent. He ends by snatching up his hat and stick and ringing for the servant.

"If anyone calls," he directs, "tell them I have gone next door."

As a study in racial contrasts "The House Next Door," of course, amounts to nothing. But for humorous purposes the comedy is capitally constructed. Its fun proceeds from its situations no less than from its characters. Its dialogue is uniformly bright and its interest is unflagging. It might be pointed out that so irascible and unreasonable a man as *Sir John* would not change the prejudiced views of a lifetime as a result of a few moments' quiet reflection, but considering the humorous result obtained this slight flaw does not matter.

There is no better actor of eccentric character on our stage than Mr. Dodson, and his impersonation of *Sir John* is as clearly cut as a cameo and as polished as a sapphire. Mr. Thomas Findlay softens the character of *Sir Isaac* until he forfeits much of the interest of that personage, but his performance, on the whole, is good. So, also, are the representations of the sons and daughters by Mr. William J. Kelly, Mr. Regan Hughston, Miss Mabel Roebuck, and Miss Farnia Marinoff.

EVEN more out of the conventional groove, but sentimental rather than humorous in its appeal, is "The Climax." The name of its author, Mr. Edward Locke, was unfamiliar to me at first, though, on reflection, I now recall that he acted the insignificant character of the walking delegate of the Musicians' Union in the original cast of "The Music Master."

It is easy to see that Mr. Locke has become saturated with the tenderly sympathetic spirit of the uncommonly fine drama in which Mr. David Warfield won fame and fortune. Yet it must be said,

in behalf of the new author, that while he has reflected the spirit of "The Music Master" he has not encroached upon its theme. "The Climax" is his own, quite

as much as if he were wholly unacquainted with the other play.

"The Climax" springs from melody no less than from life. It is the only successful drama I remember which entwines its theme around a musical *motif*. The plan has been tried before, and it has usually failed because it has been quite impossible to place the musician and the dramatist in equal balance. The double arts of the stage have refused to amalgamate.

This has been a season of small casts and single settings, so it is no surprise that "The Climax" contains only four characters and but one scene. The dominant personage is *Luigi Golfanti*, a poor, kindly old Italian singing-master, a *Latin Von Barwig* in the mixture of gentleness and irascibility in his nature and in his quaint aloofness from the practical things of life. A second character is *Pietro*, his son, a swarthy, hot-tempered and sometimes morose young composer. A third, whose fate gives the play its propulsive force, is *Ade-*



Photograph by Hall, New York

Miss Leona Watson and William Lewers in "The Climax"

Adelina Von Hagen, old *Luigi's* pupil from a Western town, with golden ambitions to become a great operatic celebrity. A fourth is *John Raymond*, a young doctor who loves her but hates the life she is preparing to enter.

These are all. You see them in the gray monotony of their half-starved existences. You listen to the stories of their joys and sorrows. You look on amusedly at their differences and quarrels. It all seems very simple, one of those little copies from common-place life which every one knows and any one might write.

But gradually the art that is hidden in the little play asserts itself. Its story comes to you both in words and melody, and from the music an atmosphere, which is at once unique and fascinating, is developed. There is, too, an enticing pathos in the story. Sometimes it approaches dangerously close to the shallows of bathos, but when you fear that its fragrance is about to evaporate, the play recovers itself and renews its grip upon you.

Adelina is in New York pursuing her singing lessons in poverty, when she is induced to make her home in the poor flat of old *Luigi*, her music teacher, who was her father's distant relative. To the humble apartment she brings cheer,

and to old *Luigi* comes the thrill of a great joy as gradually he detects the development of her golden voice. But to young *Pietro* comes a strange unrest, for he has fallen in love with his father's pupil. His adoration is the inspiration of "The Song of the Soul" over the composition of which he spends his time.



Photograph by Hall, New York

Effingham A. Pinto in "The Climax"

At length comes a time when a slight surgical operation on *Adelina's* throat is necessary for the final perfection of her singing. *Dr. Raymond* has vainly pleaded with her to give up her ambitions for the stage, as he is fearful of the influence of the life upon her character. He takes her to a noted specialist for the operation and afterwards, during her weeks of enforced silence, he is given charge of her case. He knows the power of mental suggestion and attempts to apply it to her, seeing in his success the only possibility of making her his wife, for *Adelina* has told him that her future will be devoted to her art.

The day arrives when *Adelina* shall again try her voice. What is her horror and old *Luigi's* consternation when the sweet notes refuse to sound! She tries again and again. Failure is her only reward. Her thoughts turn to self-destruction but her womanly strength stays her hand. And in the meantime old *Luigi's* little flat is hushed in sorrow. The piano is silent. "The Song of the Soul" is forgotten.

The final act reveals *Adelina* on her wedding-morning. She has put her old ambitions behind her. She will live the life that fortune has decreed. Old *Luigi* and even *Pietro* have determined to make her last day with them happy. Elaborate are the preparations for her humble marriage festival.

Meanwhile, the paralysis of the muscles of *Adelina's* throat has been passing away. In the flurry of her preparations for her marriage she has neglected to use the spray which *Dr. Raymond* has prescribed. The hour for the ceremony is almost at hand when the forlorn *Pietro* opens the dusty piano and idly strums the melody of "The Song of the Soul." Pitying him in his downcast mood, *Adelina* involuntarily attempts to accompany him. Suddenly the golden notes pour forth, purer, more beautiful than before. Joy replaces vain regrets in the dingy studio. The miracle of miracles has occurred.

But old *Luigi's* sensitive ear has detected a new and undreamed of beauty in his pupil's voice. There is now something more in it than the cold perfection of a wonderful technique. During the six

months' silence it has gained soul, the indefinable expression of the great love that has come into *Adelina's* heart.

So the curtain falls, not on her lover's dismissal but with the hint that he will realize the value of her great gift and that she will be the greater genius because of the love he has inspired in her. It is old *Luigi*, who is to be left alone, who prophesies *Adelina's* future artistic greatness.

The acting of this unique little play is unusually able. Mr. Albert Bruning's *Luigi* is fairly within hailing distance of Mr. Warfield's *Von Barwig*, though it has not the finesse of that master portrait. Miss Leona Watson, who is the *Adelina*, acts daintily and, unlike most actresses who impersonate great singers, she sings well. Thus she employs two arts to create a single illusion. Mr. E. A. Pinto is the gloomy *Pietro*, who voices his moods in the tones of the piano. He, too, is equal to the double requirements of his character. Mr. William Lewers has the thankless rôle of the doctor.

One may see the play again and again without failing to fall under its spell.

THE third in this little group of belated plays has just been acted in New York for trial purposes at two special matinees. So conclusively did it establish its value as an unique example of humorously turned irony that, though it was withdrawn, it will be held in reserve for next season.

The title of the comedy is "The Incubus," and its English version is a capital translation by Mr. Laurence Irving, probably with a few discreet changes, of the French play, "Les Hanneçons," by M. Eugene Brieux. To all who keep in touch with the Parisian stage, the original version has long been familiar. But even those best acquainted with its success abroad have not suspected that its peculiar Gallic story could be set into English with so little reason to rouse Anglo-Saxon repugnance and, at the same time, with so slight a sacrifice of its cleverly directed satire, its subtleties of situation, and its niceties of character drawing. From our point of view, the domestic condition with which it deals is unquestionably indelicate, though finical,



Photograph by Hall, New York

Albert Bruning as *Luigi Golfanti* in Joseph Weber's production of Edward Locke's remarkable play, "The Climax"

indeed, must be the spectator who can find aught but good entertainment in its performance.

There is a grain of philosophy, also, in the picture which "The Incubus" sketches of domestic life when not subjected to the restraints of the marriage tie. M. Brioux, the author, who is a member of the French Academy, is a moralist, but not addicted to the usually dull processes of abstract moralizing. In this instance he tells the story of the experiment of *Pierre Cottrell*, a serious professor of natural history, and allows you to draw your own inferences.

Cottrell's conduct, except in one essential particular, is quite beyond reproach. He is domestic and moderate in all his habits, but he fears the obligations which accompany the matrimonial knot. He longs for a home, yet he wishes his retreat from its responsibilities left open. *Charlotte*, the companion in his experiment, is a vixenish little creature, of affectionate impulses but of lightning-like explosions of temper. Her fiber is coarser than his. She is of the common people, an hysterical little animal with velvety paws that conceal sharp claws.

The *Professor's* fondly harbored illusions of his unconventional domestic experiment gradually disappear as eruptions grow more numerous and reconciliations more difficult, and they vanish altogether when, in a fit of temper, *Charlotte* destroys a book of his much prized botanical specimens. The act is the culmination of a quarrel over the *Professor's* contemplated visit to a friend's house. *Charlotte* has locked the door and tossed the key from the window. It has fallen on the head of a neighbor and roused his resentment. This outcome of a long succession of petty tyrannies, crowned with the destruction of his book, leads *Cottrell* to take advantage of a suspicion that *Charlotte* has violated his trustfulness, and to use it as a pretext to drive her out of his life.

Here is proof of the soundness of his pet theory. He is easily rid of an incompatible companion. Matrimony has not barred the door between him and freedom. He will proceed to enjoy the luxury of a well earned rest from woman's tyranny. He will sit on the table or put

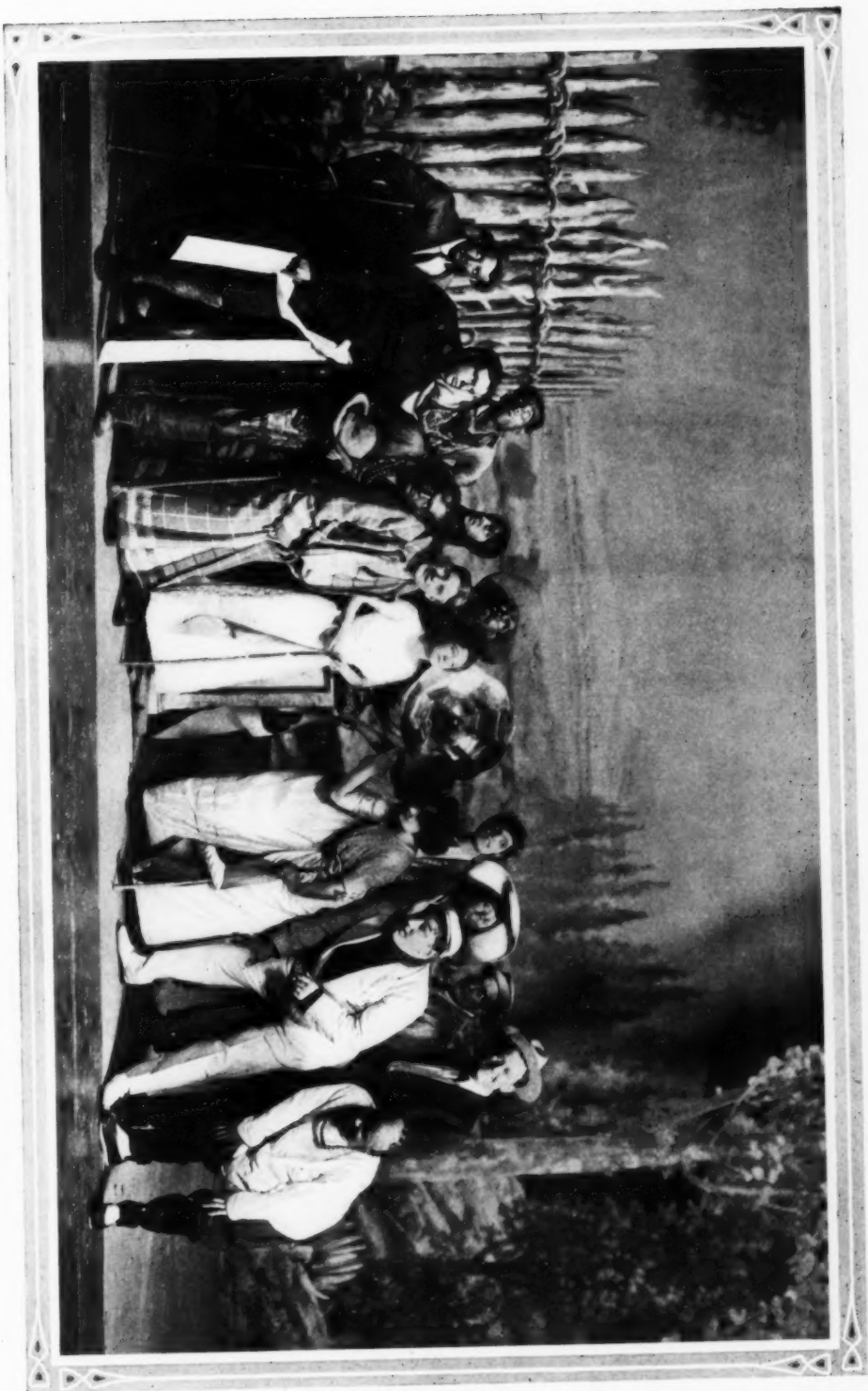
his muddy boots on the sofa, if he wills. He will saturate the room with the smoke of his beloved pipe. He will come home late to dinner, or linger in the cafés and watch the world and its wife march by. He will go botanizing in Brittany—and alone, thank Heaven! His past life has had its inconveniences, but he has at least escaped the incubus of an indestructible matrimonial obligation.

But has he? Ah, has he?

It is left to be proved to the professor that the chains of his own forging still bind. *Charlotte* is in no mood to permit him to escape so easily. Rumors begin to drift in upon him from many sources that she has determined upon suicide. The humor of this complete extinction appeals hugely to him. The scheduled time for her fatal plunge into the Seine from the Pont Neuf passes as her flock of sympathizers appeal to him to speak the word of hope. Not much! The holiday in the country is too near—that holiday which is to be the fruit of the two hundred francs he has laboriously and clandestinely saved from 'bus fares. Freedom seems in his grasp when lo! a boatman carries back to him the dripping *Charlotte*. He has pulled her from the river and the professor's holiday savings must now be that worthy's reward. *Charlotte* has her victim back in her clutches more firmly than before. The tyranny of his existence is to remain unbroken.

The irony of the elderly professor's predicament throughout the comedy is humorously shown. The characters are amusingly drawn and the situations are capitally devised. The irregularity of the relationship of the professor and *Charlotte* once accepted, there is nothing in the play to give offense, while the cleverness with which the story is told will scarcely fail to win respect.

It is a pity that, when "The Incubus" enters the repertoire of next season, Mr. Laurence Irving and his wife, Miss Mabel Hackney, will not be in this country to impersonate *Professor Cottrell* and *Charlotte*. The talented son of the late Sir Henry Irving, and his wife, seemed to me to be peculiarly fitted to the two parts when I saw them at the trial performance. Without a hint of sensual suggestiveness they reflected exactly the Gal-



Photograph by Hall, New York

The last scene in "Going Some," the farce by Rex Beach and Paul Armstrong that has set all New York laughing



Photograph by Otto Sarony Company, New York

Laurence Irving and his wife, Mabel Hackney, in the new comedy "The Incubus"

lic flavor of the comedy. It will not be difficult to cast the other eight rôles, although they demand the same delicacy of acting.

GOING Some," a new farce by Mr. Paul Armstrong, aided by Mr. Rex Beach, who probably splashed on the local color, is frankly intended for laughing purposes only. It achieves its

humble object in a boisterous, good-natured way—there is no doubt of that—but I think it would have been even more amusing had its story been curtailed and concentrated.

The piece is a grandchild of the thriving family of college-plays, the mother of which is Mr. George Ade's "The College Widow," except for the unessential difference that the scene of its hero's



Photograph by Hall, New York

Frank Lalor and Mrs. Annie Yeamans in Act II of "The Candy Shop"

adventure is remote from his *alma mater*. The intrepid athletic exploit of Yale's "head yeller" takes place on the Flying Heart Ranch in New Mexico, before a variegated assemblage of college men, cowboys, Mexicans, Indians, and half-breeds, which enhances the oddity of the story.

The cowboy sports of the Flying Heart had backed a runner from their

crowd against a fleet-footed cook from the Centipede outfit. Their phonograph and its "Holy City" record were the price of their confidence, for the Centipede's "dark horse" has sprinted to victory. Loud were the lamentations and threats of revenge.

That was the condition of affairs when *J. Wallingford Speed*, accompanied by "*Larry*" Glass, his trainer, arrived at the

ranch. It didn't matter that *Speed's* athletic achievements had been confined to leading the cheering on his college's side lines. He had to build up a reputation with the girls so, being far from home, he introduced himself as old Eli's all around champion athlete. Here was the Flying Heart cowboys' cherished opportunity.

Would *Speed* enter against the wing-footed Centipede cook? Sure! It all seemed easy to *Speed* when he made the rash promise. *Culver Covington*, his friend, the intercollegiate one-hundred yard champion, would arrive in a few days, and on one pretext or another *Speed* would contrive to have himself replaced for the event.

The two intermediate acts are devoted to *Speed's* period of training under the direction of *Glass* in the ranch bunkhouse. Gradually it becomes apparent to the eager cowboys that their newly found champion isn't a runner at all. But he must run, just the same! And if he loses—Yip!

Covington finally arrives but—worse luck!—with a broken toe. Now it is grimly “up to” *Speed*. Run he must, not only to recover the phonograph, but to save his life.

How the cook from the Centipede developed a yellow streak and sneaked over in the night to sell the race to his opponent is the way the authors rescue *Speed* from his predicament.

The foot-race around the Centipede Corral is the final incident and it is extremely ludicrous. Of course it is only a replica of the grandstand scenes which figure in all the college plays, but that does not dilute the excitement which the authors manage to work up. *Speed* wins and the last glimpse shows the cowboys in raptures over the recovery of their beloved phonograph from the hands of their rivals.

Mr. Lawrence Wheat, as the bogus athlete, catches the authors' spirit handily. The really humorous figure in the cast is the equally bogus trainer, a part which exactly fits Mr. Walter Jones and of which he takes full advantage. The others do not matter much, though Miss Oza Waldorp wins a measure of success as a far-western coquette.

THE case of Miss Olga Nethersole is beyond diagnosis. Fifteen years ago there was not a more promising emotional star in England. She developed a predilection for American audiences. We noticed it exultantly and laid our plans to capture her for our own.

Then came the surrender of Miss Nethersole's art to such hysterical monstrosities as “Carmen,” “Sapho,” “Camilie,” and a kindred brood of sinister, mawkish plays that extended to “The Labyrinth” of recent unsavory memory. The frenzied flights of passion that once had thrilled us now inspired ridicule. The mucilaginous Nethersolean kiss became an osculatory joke.

This year Miss Nethersole hinted vaguely at something better, something that was to be in keeping with those other days.

“I am going to cast my fortunes with the American dramatist,” said she. “I am about to appear as a noble wife and mother in a great American play.”

Miss Nethersole is now in our midst but I hope her stay will not be for long. I surmise, indeed, that it will not. Her “noble wife and mother” is *Barbara Lawrence*, a tenement house reformer, and her “great American play” is a curious fabric of strained coincidences and grisly horrors by Mr. William J. Hurlbut, entitled “The Writing on the Wall.”

The nobility of this melodramatic mother lies partly in the fact that she has a platonic lover. To offset it her husband, who is a rich real estate proprietor, has a “friend.” Needless to say platonism does not figure in this second relationship. These domestic complications are calculated to thicken the Nethersolean plot which has been hatching from the moment of the curtain's rise.

Barbara and her fellow slum-workers concentrate their attack upon a ramshackle tenement which, unknown to her at first, is owned by her husband. She demands new fire-escapes. He pretends to accede but, instead, he paints the old ones. Then comes a Christmas party for the children of its tenants and *Barbara* sends her own little Harry—her darling, golden-haired, much Faunterloved Harry—to take part in the celebration. The house burns down. The rickety fire-



Photograph by Hall, New York

Miss Louise Dresser and the matinee girls in the new Hobart Golden musical comedy, "The Candy Shop"

escapes collapse. Little Harry helps to swell the casualty list.

This bereavement overtakes *Barbara* at the moment when she becomes aware of her husband's faithlessness. It ignites the fuse of Miss Nethersole's emotional fireworks. Through a whole act the stage blazes with multicolored hysterics. Up go the rockets and down come the sticks! Roman candles of maudlin grief sputter, explode, and die out! Pin-wheels of lachrymose lament whirl and sizzle and snap! Firecrackers of fury go off in a bunch!

"The Writing on the Wall," however, is handsomely staged and, except for its star, it is not badly acted. I regret exceedingly to write so unpleasantly of a woman who is, in a sense, our guest. But she claims to be an artist, and she must be judged by the standard to which she pretends.

THE *Candy Shop*" is a capital title for a summer show. Its stock consists of feminine bon-bons, melodic creams, comedy taffy, song-and-dance caramels, and ginger-pop wit tied up in neat little packages and served with the delicacy that usually characterizes Mr. Charles B. Dillingham's light entertainments.

Mr. William Rock and Miss Maude Fulton, an amusing pair, are the chief conspirators and the play's main reliance. Miss Louise Dresser heads a feminine legion in the beauty department. Miss Dresser's two songs, "The Candy Kid" and "Mr. Othello;" Miss Bliss Milford's "And the Villain Goes to Jail;" Mrs. Yeaman's "tipsy" scene, in which she is assisted by Mr. Gaze, and Mr. Rock and Miss Fulton's new version of their old "In Vaudeville" specialty are the real hits of the show. The whole affair is as harmless and uncertain as heat-lightning.



Will Rock, Miss Maude Fulton, with their Mongolian assistants in "The Candy Shop"